

FULL MOON PRESENTS

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CULT • HORROR • SCI-FI • FANTASY • EXPLOITATION



THE HORROR OF  
**GENE SIMMONS**  
ROCKSTAR • MOVIE MOGUL • FAN

**KISS** Legend on his latest venture: Erebus Pictures  
**PLUS:** John Harrison on **TALES FROM THE DARKSIDE: THE MOVIE**  
**AND:** Vigilante Horror • Sybil Danning

**SUBSPECIES** • Linnea Quigley • **SECRET SANTA**

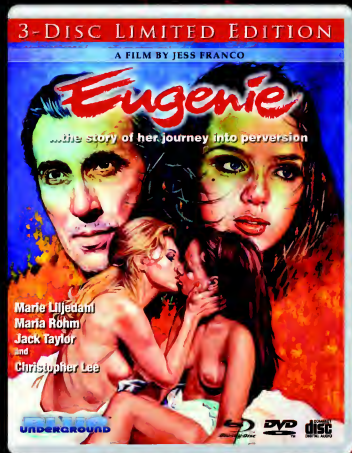
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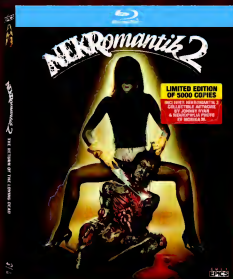
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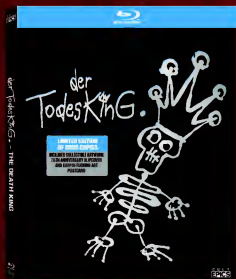
## SPECIAL FEATURES

- Includes Two versions of Nekromantik:
  - New Director's Approved HD transfer (taken from the original Super 8mm negative)
  - New Grindhouse HD version (taken from the theatrical 35mm print)
- Introduction by Jorg Buttgerreit
- Q&A with Jorg Buttgerreit at the American Cinematheque (2013)
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- Audio Commentary by Jorg Buttgerreit and co-author Franz Rodenkirchen
- The Making of Nekromantik • Nekromantik Featurette
- Still Photo Gallery • JB Trailers • Original Motion Picture Soundtrack



## SPECIAL FEATURES

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TO AD WONDROUS

# DELIRIOUS WORDS

I've told this tale before, and I'll tell it again quickly: Gene Simmons was my first monster. I saw him on the cover of the 1977 KISS album LOVE GUN, head back, fangs sharp, dressed in chain mail with bat wings and ghostly women swooning at his feet. I didn't understand what I was looking at, but I knew whatever it was had irrevocably gripped my imagination. After suffering night terrors because of this image, this creature that I truly believed was "almost human" (to steal a song title from that very record), I eventually realized that KISS was a rock band and that Gene was just a guy in a costume. The wizard behind the drapes was revealed...

But that revelation didn't curb my interest. Rather, it deepened my fascination. The idea that something so nightmarish and horrific could be a person, flesh and blood and flawed like me, like people I knew, was extraordinary. I became a KISS fan, a fan of the illusion, a sucker for the marketing, a slave to the show. That love evolved simpatico with my interests in everything dark, strange, silly and theatrical. It all just clicked. And I carried it with me for life...

Gene is an interesting guy. He too found his first dose of dreams with encounters of the phantasmagorical kind, watching shuddery black-and-white horror films on TV when he first immigrated to America as a child. It was then that his own concepts of being something bigger than you were born were formed. And he did it. With KISS. With his various businesses. With his pop-culture endeavors. Even Gene's failures are interesting. And pulsing beneath all of it is his unapologetic love of horror films, comic books and the arcane.

Which is why I support Gene's latest endeavor, Erebus Pictures. Teaming up with WWE Films, Simmons is prepping a series of theatrical horror films that he will produce and nurture. These aren't quickie splatter flicks looking for an in-and-out shock and run. These are, to quote Gene, "evolved" horror films, made for modest budgets and shot with craft and care, trading in atmosphere, mystery and blood-freezing terror.

I support Gene. I genuinely care about him. I owe him much of my professional success and I'm happy to say that, because of that profession, I have become friends with Gene. I'm comfortable in calling it a



friendship. I mean, I don't go bowling with Gene on Sundays. He doesn't call me when he needs to move a couch. And we don't get on the phone to talk about a movie he just saw. Well, we do over e-mail on occasion. So I guess, yes, we're friends. I know the man behind the makeup, the guy behind the persona and the politics and the controversial bravado. And I like him. Lots.

With this big DELIRIUM cover, coverage of his new venture and a flashback to his work in film and television, I hope I've created an interesting portrait of

a decent guy, a dreamer and a restless mind addicted to creating. I want him to succeed. I want Erebus to succeed. I hope that, even if you're not a big KISS fan or a fan of Gene Simmons (which I know many of you are not), you'll groove on this snapshot of an artist who changed and continues to affect pop culture and modern media.

Of course, the rest of this ninth issue of DELIRIUM is just as killer. Buckle in for Jason Bene's blowout interview with another multi-hyphenate, writer, composer, director, producer and all-around awesome guy John Harrison's underrated omnibus TALES FROM THE DARKSIDE: THE MOVIE. It's an incredible piece of work, as is W. Brice McVicar's look at the classic Full Moon flick SUBSPECIES. The rest of the material filling out this issue is esoteric, erotic, wild and untamed.

Just like the magazine itself. Long live DELIRIUM. Long live Gene Simmons. May his blood drool freely, may our ink run red rivers. Forever. Always. Eternal.

—Chris Alexander, Editor  
[chris@deliriummagazine.com](mailto:chris@deliriummagazine.com)

# GENE SIMMONS

Emperor of EREBUS

By CHRIS ALEXANDER



**Y**ou know a version of Gene Simmons. Likely, you know the one that has stomped stages and graced myriad media for over four decades. You know the one: bloody, bat-winged, big-booted, metal- and leather-coated, greasepaint-wearing, fire-breathing demon. Not a demon—the Demon. As the bass player and co-founder of the world's best-selling and perhaps best-known rock band KISS, Simmons is a mythical presence, one beloved and imitated everywhere, all around the globe, likely forever.

There are other versions of Gene Simmons, however. There's Simmons the actor (see the next Gene-centric feature on page XXX). There's Simmons the powerhouse businessman. There's Simmons the father, the husband. The reality TV show star. The record producer and label mogul. In fact, there are so many versions of Simmons that, much like his idol Lon Chaney was dubbed, he really could be christened the Man of 1,000 Faces.

Make that 1,001.

Now, **DELIRIUM** gives you Gene Simmons: horror-movie mogul. As was announced this past summer, Simmons has partnered with WWE Studios to form Erebus Pictures, a niche imprint specializing in more sophisticated horror films, movies intended for wide theatrical release.

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As Simmons preps the first of those films, the now-in-preproduction **TEMPLE**, **DELIRIUM** sat down with the man at the legendary offices of his band manager Doc McGhee on Sunset Boulevard to learn more about the world of Erebus.

This, readers, is a **DELIRIUM** exclusive. Read on...

**DELIRIUM:** It's well-known that you're not a fan of graphic horror. But you're partnering with WWE with Erebus and, from what I see and the films the WWE has produced thus far in the genre, well, they haven't been exactly mild; they're heavy, hard, violent films.

**SIMMONS:** These are elevated horror, if

you will, and when there's a reason for something horrific to happen, I'm there. The **FINAL DESTINATION** movies, you know somebody is going to get it, and they are designed like **TEN LITTLE INDIANS**, and in different, horrific ways, people die. It's too easy when there's a serial killer and this guy's main motus operandi is to cut people up and then torture them, the skinning and all that kind of stuff. Of course, it's easy to see that. It's still true today; it has always been true. When you're driving your car down a freeway, the thing that's going to make everybody stop is the guts on the highway, the more people will stop to look. It's too easy to do that. In any case, I meander; the idea of Erebus is to do closer to **PSYCHO** and less **CHAINSAW MASSACRE**.

**DELIRIUM:** There's actually not a drop of blood in **THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE**. It's a very restrained film. People thought they saw more blood than they did.









the subject matter is limited, but you could do comedies and love stories and lots of other stuff. Including SIGNS. I've contended that M. Night Shyamalan's SIGNS, which I thought was a very good film, without Mel Gibson, without the big star talent, without M. Night's money, is a \$2-million movie. I don't believe that these movies depend on stars, because if it's high-concept, I sort of want to see it. Having said that, I would pay, with the new fund that we have, for a star to come up if it makes financial sense, but not for creative. Jake Gyllenhaal is probably bringing back more dollars for his fee than some of the bigger stars. And they're good films and they're lower-budget films.

**DELIRIUM:** How much creative control do you have personally with Erebus?

**SIMMONS:** Mostly all of it. The first two things that are being done are actually interesting pieces of material that Michael Luisi, my partner, found. They are decent scripts. TEMPLE is basically about the most advanced computer structure ever built. It reminds me of DEMON SEED and a few other movies where the computers are so advanced. WARGAMES had that thing, it was kind of way advanced and building as a computer that's beyond anything. And of course, things start to happen in the same way that in ALIENS, they

send in a commando team to find out what the hell happened. What happens is that there are a lot of deaths, and no one can understand why there, of all places.

**DELIRIUM:** So there's a bit of mystery at its core?

**SIMMONS:** Oh, more than a mystery, yeah. And then they come in and it's a combination of TEN LITTLE INDIANS, probably closer in tone to John Carpenter's THE THING. Which I thought was a better film than Howard Hawks' THE THING.

starts sci-fi and turns into horror. It turns into a monster movie. And finally at the end, the big reveal. So TEMPLE is closer in vein and in tone to THE THING.

**DELIRIUM:** Now, Carpenter's THE THING relied heavily on some pretty visceral special FX. Is TEMPLE going to be an FX-driven film as well?

**SIMMONS:** We are taking a look at that. We added some more money into the budget just for the special effects, because the script is very good. DEVIL'S TRIANGLE is exactly like what it sounds like. There's a lot of wacky stuff that goes on out there, with some young treasure hunters.

**DELIRIUM:** So it's a Bermuda Triangle story?

**SIMMONS:** Yes. It's never been explained why so many ships and so many planes have been lost there. To this day, compasses go nuts when you go into that area. There's something going on. They think there are large methane deposits underwater that release naturally, and so people die and ships sink and there are whirlpools and all this kind of stuff. But there's no explaining why planes up there



**DELIRIUM:** Sure. Me too.

**SIMMONS:** Often, remakes are not as good.

**DELIRIUM:** There's a handful of great ones.

**SIMMONS:** As much as I like the new PLANET OF THE APES, there's still something with the lower budget and the bad special effects of the original. And that last scene. And Rod Serling's dialogue. Dr. Zaius and all those guys. I mean, they're well-written character pieces. So TEMPLE is closer in tone to John Carpenter's THE THING. Which is intrinsically a science fiction story. So, there's a spaceship that crashlands way out in the frozen north, and that's the only time you see the spaceship. From there on, because it's freezing outside, you're inside with all these bearded guys. The rest is TEN LITTLE INDIANS. Someone among us, one or more, is not from here, and that's a fucking creepy idea. So it

get lost. There's a famous one with three Coast Guard planes that lost their bearings. Some people think it's a doorway to another dimension. We don't really deal with any of that, just that stuff has happened, and stuff is going to happen to our crew.

**DELIRIUM:** Where are you shooting?

**SIMMONS:** First it was in Malta, and it's all politics and tax incentives. We wanted certain things and couldn't get them. So we moved the location. Then we went after a director we liked who wanted to change the script, and we got rid of that director. So we are looking probably at November, where the tax and the location and the right director is going to be, and right on the heels of that would be DEVIL.

**DELIRIUM:** Have you cast the movie yet?

**SIMMONS:** Not at this point. We have to get our act together before, because nowadays everybody wants pay-or-play, which to those people who don't know means I'm



guaranteeing whatever deal we make; for argument's sake, for three weeks in November. But what happens if the movie's late? Too bad, you get your money. We're trying to be responsible for the money.



First we have to get our act together, get the right director for the right locations, get the right tax incentives, and then right close to the finish line, you hire your actors. Because we're not dependent on stars. Hey, listen, it would be great if we could get somebody whose name you recognize, a Michael Shannon or somebody



ing enough.

**DELIRIUM:** They just can't open a movie necessarily any more.

**SIMMONS:** But by the way, they can if the movie is high-concept enough.

**DELIRIUM:** Well, the Blumhouse movies aren't necessarily geared toward horror fans, they're date movies for a Friday night, and so a guy like Ethan Hawke will bring in an older crowd, you're getting a PG-13 rating, you're getting an older crowd and all kinds of demographics. It's actually quite ingenious.

**SIMMONS:** Yes.

**DELIRIUM:** If you look at the IMDb entry for *TEMPLE*, under Cast...there's you! Are you going to star in these movies? Are you doing a Crypt Keeper kind of thing?

**SIMMONS:** No, we tossed around that idea, but we think we have to hit the ground seriously. Each movie is a standalone. There are other concepts; there's *GENE SIMMONS' HOUSE OF HORRORS*, which is based on my comic book and could be an anthology thing. That's being developed by Reliance and their Georgeville company as a TV series, but that's for later.

**DELIRIUM:** So back to WWE's involvement in your partnership: Can you tell me a little bit about the mechanics there? How that came about?

**SIMMONS:** They called me. "Hey, we want to do a thing, we like your brand, we

think you're good-looking." The only reason to form a partnership with anybody is they have to bring something to the table. Otherwise, why make somebody your partner when you could just hire them? The time you make somebody your partner is when you think that with them, bottom line, you personally make more money. It's as simple as that.

[Note: At this point in the interview, Simmons picks up a copy of *DELIRIUM* #1 and leafs through it, stopping at the article on Stuart Gordon's *RE-ANIMATOR*.]

**SIMMONS:** *RE-ANIMATOR* is in there.

**DELIRIUM:** Yeah, that was produced by our publisher, Charles Band. Have you seen *RE-ANIMATOR*?

**SIMMONS:** A long time ago.

**DELIRIUM:** Fantastic ending.

**SIMMONS:** I don't remember the ending.

**DELIRIUM:** The ending is when the severed head of a man who's lusted after this young girl for so long finally gets his way, and controls his headless body to tie her to a gurney in a hospital morgue and proceeds to hold his own head to lick her, and just as he's about to go between her legs, he's interrupted. It's coitus interruptus.

**SIMMONS:** How does he tie her up if he doesn't have arms or legs?

**DELIRIUM:** Well, he controls his body. And he has a series of zombie drones, of course, that help him on his quest.

**SIMMONS:** I see...



like that who doesn't necessarily mean box office, but can really act. They have gravitas, I mean, there a lot of those guys. I know Tobey Maguire, he needs a film...

**DELIRIUM:** And they still have names. That's the Blumhouse model as well, taking these stars like Ethan Hawke, who still have enough clout, but you can get them at a reasonable price.

**SIMMONS:** Yes, where you like their act-

# SIMMONS ON SCREEN

By BRIAN STEWARD

**A** monster-boot-clad, makeup-wearing, fire-breathing demon, a terrorist, a drug dealer, a murderous transvestite, a preacher, a radio DJ and a lawyer: These are just some of the characters Gene Simmons has portrayed on screen. He may not yet be a man of 1,000 faces, but he's sure a man of many.

Most people know Simmons as one of the founding members of the iconic rock group KISS. Some know him as a master businessman. But what many may not realize is he is also an accomplished actor with dozens of film and television credits. Simmons and his family were even the subject of a reality show, *GENE SIMMONS: FAMILY JEWELS*. After we finished grilling him about his latest venture, Erebus Pictures, *DELIRIUM* decided to pick his brain about his film career and movies in general. So, let's drop the opening act; here it is in proper KISS fashion. You wanted the best...you got the best: the hottest interview in the world, Gene Simmons...

**DELIRIUM:** Is acting something you were always interested in, or was there a specific experience that gave you the bug?

**GENE SIMMONS:** Well, it started when I was a kid. In New York, they used to have *MILLION DOLLAR MOVIE* [on TV], as it was called, when a million was a big number. They would show *KING KONG* and *THE LOST WORLD* and silent movies and all kinds of stuff. They would show them at least twice a day, in the morning and in the evening. Then, when I started seeing *FRANKENSTEIN* and *DRACULA* and all that stuff, all I wanted to be was the new Boris Karloff. I became fascinated by Lon Chaney Sr. and the fact that he put on his own makeup, and that he was the Man of 1,000 Faces. So much so that when I grew up, I trademarked Man of 1,000 Faces as the name of my production company. When I found Van Halen, they were actually signed to Man of 1,000 Faces. And...this rock 'n' roll thing got in the way. But,



in a very real way, at least as far as it concerns me—and nobody else in the band—it's my love for horror, sci-fi and all that, although I'm not a fan of slashers at all. Gore and slashers do nothing for me. It's too easy to show an open body with worms coming out of it. Get outta here, be a little more inventive.

**DELIRIUM:** The theater of the mind is always scarier anyway.

**SIMMONS:** Theater of the mind, yeah! The midpoint where it really works is *THE EXORCIST*. Great storytelling; then, OK, yeah, the pea soup can flow and all that because there is a great story behind it. For me, what naturally manifested itself with me and the band is my love of Chaney Sr., and even the *Godzilla* stuff and the comic-book stuff. My hand gesture, which has now become sort of, you know, a worldwide thing, people do it at football stadiums and when somebody says "Rock on!", they shoot up that hand gesture that I started 41 years ago. But it really came from an artist named Steve Ditko by way

of a character called Doctor Strange, which is soon gonna be a motion picture. Hopefully he is going to be doing the hand gesture. Ironically enough, in sign language it means "I love you."

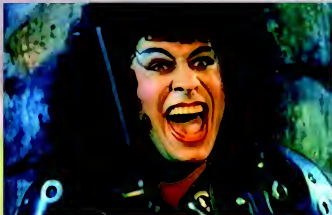
**DELIRIUM:** As far as your film roles, in most cases, were you approached or were there scripts that you actively pursued?

**SIMMONS:** No, I never pursued them. I produced a group called *Serenade* which then became *A Group With No Name*, and I started going out with one of the girls named Katey Sagal, who went on to do *MARRIED...WITH CHILDREN* and everything. Then I went out with another one of the girls. There were three girls in the band, plus background singers and all that. It was a big band.

Then I went out with another girl in the same band, who wound up being the secretary to a guy named Michael Crichton. Crichton, at the time, had done *THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY* and a few other things like *COMA*, and was about to do a new movie called *RUNAWAY*. She suggested that he meet me. Crichton would go on to write *CONGO* and *JURASSIC PARK* and create *ER* and lots of stuff. He actually was a brain surgeon; that's where he got his start. He decided to write screenplays and books. That's how that happened. He invited me into his office and said, "Stare into my face for 30 seconds and don't say anything, and let me know somehow you're gonna slit my throat or kill me or whatever." So I grimaced and he said, "OK, you got the job." And that was *RUNAWAY*.

And then, *WANTED: DEAD OR ALIVE* just...happened. They were gonna use Charles Bronson for this bounty hunter, and then they got Rutger Hauer. Then they called me and I walked in and they said "OK," and I got the job. Anything that I've done, bits and pieces, walk-ons, whatever, they just called up. I've never gone after a part. I just did *SCORPION*, the TV show. They just called out of the blue.

**DELIRIUM:** I'm sure it's a nice distract-







tion, since it's something you enjoy.

**SIMMONS:** Oh, yeah! I mean, I really like it. I don't envy working actors, or most of them don't work, because even if you wind up doing something, the down time between stuff, first of all, it takes so long to get anything done.

**DELIRIUM:** Oh sure, the hurry-up-and-wait factor.

**SIMMONS:** Oh, yeah! You could be on set

TRICK OR TREAT came up, they originally offered me the role of Sammi Curr, the rock-star guy. I said, "That's ridiculous, why would you do that? I'm much more interested in the DJ." So I decided to do that. Most of the stuff just comes my way and depends on my calendar availability. Recently, for some strange reason, they are interested in having Gene Simmons play Gene Simmons, if you know



for 16 hours and come on and say, "Hey," and that's it. The other part is, between jobs, unless you have a TV series that keeps you busy, you never know if you're gonna work again. It's tough.

**DELIRIUM:** It's amazing how many actors people would recognize as character actors are working-class joes, not millionaires. Being a celebrity doesn't necessarily equate to money.

**SIMMONS:** No, the big money is reserved for very few.

**DELIRIUM:** A lot of your films are more action and drama, with some sci-fi and horror in there. When you were offered roles, did you specifically choose certain parts over others to try and stay away from the KISS persona, to be accepted as more of a legitimate actor?

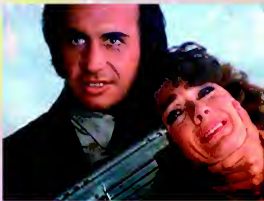
**SIMMONS:** Well, yes and no. When

what I mean. I did CASTLE, and the role I played was Gene Simmons! Then I did the SCORPION thing and I was Gene Simmons! Then CSI, they wanted me to be...Gene Simmons!

**DELIRIUM:** I'll bet there was a lot of Method acting involved in that, right?

**SIMMONS:** Well, it's peculiar. I mean, it's peculiar as a storytelling device, because the idea of stories on TV is you are supposed to suspend belief, and even though you recognize the faces, you say, "Right! It's a bad guy or a good guy or he's from space" or something, so in the middle of everybody else having different names and pretending to be somebody else, I show up with my funny hair and...play Gene Simmons.

**DELIRIUM:** That seems to be something that is more readily used in entertainment



these days. Art accepts and presents some reality and doesn't just emulate it.

**SIMMONS:** Well I think television is a very fast medium. They respond to what works...ratings and all that. When I did CSI, the ratings went up, so all of a sudden people wanted me to be in scripted TV. I got offered stuff all the time. SHARKNADO...oh, God...everything including game shows and hosting things. Mark Burnett wanted me to be the "Trump" guy on SHARK TANK when he originally launched it. I just didn't have the time.

**DELIRIUM:** That would have been inter-

the bill.

**SIMMONS:** It's one of the two most hated jobs in America...politicians and lawyers.

**DELIRIUM:** Were you ever made to feel like you had to prove yourself to other actors?

**SIMMONS:** No, never happened, but on the first day of shooting **WANTED: DEAD OR ALIVE** in Long Beach, we were at an industrial site. On the set, [director] Gary Sherman introduced me to Rutger Hauer and everybody else. You know, the entire crew was there. Rutger came over and, you know, I'm a bigger guy than Rutger. He is a little smaller—not just height-

Hessler, the director, was respected. He'd done Alfred Hitchcock [TV series] and had done drama. He was completely out of his element. We would be doing scenes, and he would come over and in his wonderful British accent would ask us, "Did you think that was good?" We'd look at each other and go, "Uh, yeah!" and he would say, "OK, good! Next scene!"

**DELIRIUM:** I was at the right age that when the movie first aired, it worked perfectly.

**SIMMONS:** Oh, it was huge! It beat CLEOPATRA, which was playing on ABC. We were on NBC, it was Halloween night. We



esting.

**SIMMONS:** Yeah, I would have enjoyed it, but they only do one show a week.

**DELIRIUM:** As far as your film roles, were you usually offered the villains, or were you ever offered the hero?

**SIMMONS:** Very few times, but **FLASH-DANCE** was one of them. I did a movie with George Clooney in his early days, a really bad film called **RED SURF**. Clooney wasn't yet a personality. He was just graduating from TV. I played a Vietnam vet who was sick and tired of violence and was just working on surfboards, of all things. And in the end, I go in with machine guns blazing and rescue Clooney. In that one I was the good guy. Come to think of it, in **THE NEW GUY** I play a preacher. In Mike Judge's movie **EXTRACT**, which had Ben Affleck and Jason Bateman, I was a bad guy, but I was a lawyer.

**DELIRIUM:** As a villain, that sort of fits

wise but physically. So I shook his hand, and he put both hands around my cheeks and kissed me on the lips. I just about sputtered and broke my water! Yeah! Strange world!

**DELIRIUM:** You are doing a lot of voice work. Do you enjoy that as much as working in front of a camera?

**SIMMONS:** Sure! It's all good. One of the lesser-known bits of trivia is, it's a combination, but I was one of the voices used for the howl in **THE WOLFMAN**.

**DELIRIUM:** Let's go over some of your other roles. Looking back at **KISS MEETS THE PHANTOM OF THE PARK**, how do you think it stands up now?

**SIMMONS:** Well, it's kitsch to those people who have some kind of memory connection. The acting was terrible. If you are a **KISS** fan, you may get something out of it. But other than that, the outfits and the makeup...terrible. Meanwhile, Gordon

were the number-one show.

**DELIRIUM:** What can you tell me about **MIAMI VICE**?

**SIMMONS:** I did the two-hour season premiere. I remember Don Johnson was, you know, cordial and everything, but wanted to make sure I knew the chicks liked him, which I thought was very strange. I played Newton Blade, a drug dealer all in white silk pajamas. Kind of a Hugh Hefner guy on a white boat with a lot of attractive girls, all wearing white bikinis. So Don Johnson comes onto my boat, and we did the scenes. During the breaks, when he and I would start talking, he'd make sure a few of the girls were around him, you know, kind of arm in arm, to let me know the chicks found him attractive. I found that bizarre. If it's your show and you are Don Johnson, you don't have to do that stuff.

**DELIRIUM:** As far as **NEVER TOO YOUNG TO DIE**, was the role originally



written that way?

**SIMMONS:** Yeah.

**DELIRIUM:** Was it written for you?

**SIMMONS:** I don't know. I didn't read the

**DELIRIUM:** Since we've covered so many of the other films already, let's jump forward in time a bit to your most recent movie, *SCOOBY-DOO! AND KISS: ROCK*

**AND ROLL MYSTERY.** I have to say, that was a lot of fun to watch.

**SIMMONS:** We really like it! It was a great group of people, with homages to [Jack] Kirby and Ditko and all the Marvel references.

**DELIRIUM:** I loved all of those references! The big-head character at the end that looked like Modok was great! I think a lot of comic-book fans will really get a kick out of that.

**SIMMONS:** Modok is exactly what it is! I sort of got Ego the Living Planet out of one character as well.

**DELIRIUM:** That's right! You're talking to a comic-book idiot...that wasn't lost on me.

**SIMMONS:** Well, we are no longer idiots, we rule the world! The fourth biggest movie of all time is *THE AVENGERS*.

**DELIRIUM:** Nerd culture is now just culture, isn't it?

**SIMMONS:** We are *the* culture.



script. All I knew was that I had two or three weeks off from a tour, and this guy Steven Paul came up and said, "Here's x amount of dollars. We want you to play two roles. Transvestite in high heels... we'll shave your chest and all that stuff and you can play another guy." I thought, "Oh, cool!" I didn't have a clue how bad the film was gonna be.

**DELIRIUM:** It has its moments, though! The outfit you wore was straight out of the Lynda Carter variety show wasn't it?

**SIMMONS:** I don't know! That's a good question!

**DELIRIUM:** Carter had a variety show nobody seems to remember.

**SIMMONS:** Sure! I remember, she did a *KISS* take-off.

**DELIRIUM:** In it, she wore that almost identical costume. I figured that was your idea.

**SIMMONS:** No, I showed up and they said, "You are wearing this."



# Master of the subspecies

By W. BRICE McVICAR

Vampires, traditionally, suck the life out of their victims—but one of Full Moon's most popular bloodsucker series had an opposite effect on its director, giving him insight into more than just low-budget filmmaking.

It was the early 1990s, and Charles Band's independent studio was enjoying great success with its PUPPET MASTER series (three films deep by 1991). An encounter with a Romanian businessman looking to get into the entertainment industry afforded director Ted Nicolaou the opportunity to not only create one of the studio's most successful and popular series of films, but also to watch a country leave dark times and slowly progress into the light.

"I had been developing some scripts for Charlie that didn't get off the ground," Nicolaou recalls. "After 1989, and the revolution in Romania, a Romanian expatriate came to Charlie and said he had been living in the States, but wanted to go back and start doing business in the newly democratized Romania."

The country had been revolutionized after a series of riots and protests in December 1989, events that led to the fall of communism in Romania and ended with the execution of longtime president Nicolae Ceausescu. By the time Nicolaou landed there, the riots and protests were long over, and the country and its citizens were slowly regaining democracy. The effects of the political turmoil was palpable.

A deal was struck wherein Romanian studio costs would be covered by the expat, leaving Full Moon to carry the bill for hotels, the American cast's salaries and any postproduction. It was an arrangement that prompted Band to turn to Nicolaou—who had already proven his worth as a director on fare such as *TER-RORVISION* and a segment of *THE DUNGEONMASTER*—asking if he'd be interested in doing some work in Romania.

"By that time," he recalls, "I was just so eager to make another film that when Charlie asked, 'Do you want to go to Romania and see what the locations are like and meet the people?', I

went off on a kind of exploratory trip, and it was the most bizarre place I'd ever been in my life. Basically, six months after the revolution, things were still.... There was nothing in the shops, nothing in the restaurants; it was a very sad and kind of confused society.

"I went there and met Vlad Paunescu, who was going to be the cinematographer, and his now-wife Oana Tofan, who was going to be the costume designer, and really hit it off with them. Vlad did not speak English at the time, but Oana did, and we'd kind of communicate through her."

Nicolaou says he immediately formed a bond with the couple and traveled the country scouting locations. It was an opportunity the director saw as too good to be true. "Charlie had a script at that time written by David Pabian," he says, "and then a friend of mine named Jack Hanson rewrote it. Basically, after I came back from that trip, I was like, 'OK, Charlie, let's do it.'"

*SUBSPECIES* involves a trio of college students studying Romanian culture and superstition. A handsome native, Stefan, befriends the girls and involves them in an ongoing war between him and his brother, the vampire Radu. Two of the girls are turned into creatures of the night by Radu, with a final battle between the two brothers ending with a severed head and the last girl, bitten by Radu just before his death, becoming a bloodsucker—albeit a good one.

Radu quickly rose in popularity with fans thanks to the performance by Anders Hove in the role.

However, Hove wasn't the original choice for the part, and was one of the last American cast members to travel to Romania.

"They sent me over a few months [after the initial trip] to start preproduction on *SUBSPECIES*, and then the cast arrived," Nicolaou says. "When I was in L.A., I had chosen Laura Tate and Michelle McBride, but the guy we had set for Radu turned out to be difficult to deal with, or something. Michael Watson, whom we had cast as Stefan, was working on *GENERAL*



*HOSPITAL* at the time, and suggested Anders Hove for Radu. I was already in Romania at that time when Charlie met Anders, but they loved him and cast him. I was living in the old Ceausescu summer palace all by myself, doing preproduction."

While cast members began to arrive and production began, Nicolaou quickly learned his lead vampire was not just a terror on the screen.

While praising Hove's performance, the director says the set was plagued by the actor's outbursts and raging temper. "He's got a very explosive anger and he's very







passionate, and he was also drinking a lot, with Michael. So every day for me was very difficult.

"After that first film, though," Nicolaou continues, "we came to like each other a lot, and on the second film, the deal was no drinking while we were shooting. But the minute we got to take the makeup off, I'd bring a bottle of wine in and we'd drink it together."

But it wasn't just Hove that created challenges during the first film's production. Remnants of communism and its long-term impact on the country impacted the film. "After I first got there and realized the poverty of the situation and the locations," Nicolaou says, "the shabby equipment we'd be using and the lack of the grip gear, I realized the best I could hope for from the first *SUBSPECIES* was a European chamber movie, just something very small and atmospheric. That's kind of what we set out to do, and that's what we ended up with."

While Nicolaou used those locations to his advantage, drenching the series in Hammer-esque mood, and the Romanian castles and countryside practically served as characters of their own, the makeup FX were also an important factor in giving *SUBSPECIES* its unique look. In particular, Radu is a conglomeration of some of the best vampires in film.

"I was definitely thinking *NOSFER-*

*ATU*, which is one of my favorite vampire looks of all time," Nicolaou says. "I thought the makeup was great. Greg Cannon designed the original look, and I think he did a great job. The fingers were always a hassle with Radu. I thought the first ones Greg did were really good, but they were so hard for Anders to keep on his fingers. Later on, when Wayne Toth took over the design on *SUBSPECIES 2*



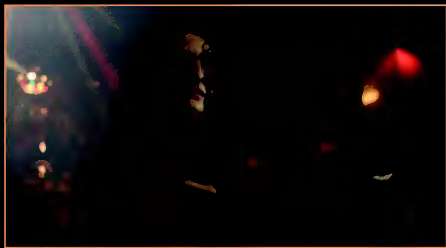


and 3, it was a little better. It kind of fell apart on 4."

Nicolaou, without knowing it, was on the cutting edge when it came to his vampire's acceptance by viewers. This was well before vampires began to be watered down in the likes of the TWILIGHT franchise, and Radu walked the thin line between menacing and sexy. It was exactly what the director intended.

"I wanted not a sexy vampire, but a truly feral one like in NOSFERATU," Nicolaou notes. "Anders managed both; he was sexy and feral at the same time. Women really liked Anders in that role, and there's something super-compelling about those stories. I think people who appreciated good old-fashioned vampires certainly latched on to the series."

Among those who were certainly impressed were the executives at Paramount, with whom Band had struck a distribution deal ensuring his direct-to-VHS films were getting plenty of shelf space in video stores. Nicolaou says that once the final film was complete, he



process, we ended up with a decent film was satisfying. When we screened it for Paramount, they really liked the film and asked for the sequels to be done. That was, really, the first step."

Paramount's interest, coupled with positive fan reception, meant the SUBSPECIES series was born. Unlike the situation with the majority of Full Moon's franchises, though, Nicolaou became to go-to director for the entire run. It's almost unheard of for one filmmaker to hold such creative reins in the Band camp, but the subsequent SUBSPECIES films were not only helmed by Nicolaou, but also written by the veteran filmmaker.

"It was mostly that I felt paternal toward the whole thing," he explains. "After the first experience in Romania, I came home and was 'Oh my God, I'm so glad that's over!' It was all kind of weird,

but after six months, you forget all the bad things and recall all the wonderful moments you had there.

"I really wanted to go back with Vlad as cinematographer, and Oana," he continues. "The thought of working with Anders again and, basically, just expanding that story became something I really, really wanted to do."

Over the following decade, Nicolaou had the opportunity to return to Romania for the filming of the subsequent sequels and delve deeper into Radu's story, providing fans with what would become one of Full Moon's most popular series. It's one that, Nicolaou says, might still have some blood in it.

"You know, I had a script before Full Moon sort of imploded," he reveals. "Charlie commissioned a screenplay for number five that was sort of a prequel. It basically

tells the story of Radu from the Dark Ages up until the beginning of the 20th century. We'd all love to do it, but it requires a little more money than Charlie's spending on his movies these days."

Whether Radu rises from the crypt ever again is anyone's guess, but regardless, Nicolaou says the series left more than just an impression on his career; it helped shape him and influenced the way he looks at the world today.

"I was lucky enough, through Charlie, to be there in Romania from the very beginning of democracy in 1990 through the end of the decade, and probably as important to me as getting to have made all those movies was just watching the society and my friends and the crew come out of the dark ages of communism into a version of the 20th century that was a little bit like the '60s, where there was a huge demographic bump of young people. To watch that flower, in the period of time I was there, was a wonderful, life-changing experience. Making movies was one thing, but witnessing historic events while you're getting to make movies is like the ultimate prize of filming outside the country.

"For me, those movies with Charlie really shaped the person I am. I'm really appreciative of that."



entered screenings with Paramount officials unsure of what the reaction would be, and it turned out he had nothing to worry about at all.

"The fact that, through the editing



# THE UNFORTUNATE ALCHEMIST

THE ALCHEMIST is an early-'80s film that has all but been lost in time.

By JOSH HADLEY

**T**he plot of THE ALCHEMIST (such as it is) deals with a man in 1871 who accidentally kills his wife, who is under control of the title character, and then is cursed to walk through time as an inhuman monster. Meanwhile, the reincarnation of the dead wife in 1955 is having visions of the past, and then the daughter of the cursed man trades her soul for that of her father, who then tries to save his daughter's soul while the reincarnation of the dead wife deals with her visions and the damned alchemist watches and...yeah, it's intensely convoluted.

All of this happens in a movie that's not even 90 minutes long, and yet somehow, it manages to be boring and is padded beyond belief. At least a third of this movie is footage of people walking somewhere in silence or driving somewhere in silence. I do not blame editor Ted Nicolaou, who I am sure was only doing what he was told, but I can't help but feel there was both too much plot for a single film at the same time there was not enough story for a single film.

THE ALCHEMIST is a film that no one wanted, no one liked and even fewer remember exists, yet I have an affinity for it. The atmosphere is very much that of a Saturday-afternoon matinee, and the score by Richard Band is amazing—easily the best thing about the movie.

Charles Band was simply a gun for hire on THE ALCHEMIST; this was the only

time in his entire career this ever happened, and he wound up uncredited. Craig Mitchell, Don Coscarelli's collaborator on his first feature JIM, THE WORLD'S GREATEST, began directing and was let go relatively early in the process, and Band (credited as James Amante) finished the film. Stars Robert Ginty and Lucinda Dooling were very vocal about their dislike of the production, and in fact, Ginty died without ever seeing the final cut.

While the film was made in 1981, it did not see release until 1983 on overseas home video, and finally opened theatrically in

the U.S. when Band himself picked it up for release though Empire Pictures two years after that. With big-screen play almost no one showed up for and a small VHS release via Lightning Video, it's a surprise anyone remembers the movie at all. It was virtually sneaked out on DVD-R by Amazon for burn-on-demand, but otherwise the film is all but lost. So while you can technically get it on disc, the video-cassette is actually easier to encounter in the wild.

Should you seek out THE ALCHEMIST? The story is OK at best, the acting is serviceable, the makeup FX are laughable (although the visual FX are quite good) and there is no alchemy in it at all! (There is sorcery, but not alchemy.) Yet it's worth checking out for the fantastic score and the good atmosphere, and it remains a curious piece of the Full Moon family puzzle.



In prepping this issue's column, I agonized over writing about the subject at hand under the title *Strange Love*. But the more I thought about it, the more it seemed to fit. Our society seems to indeed have a strange love for or fascination with films that feature some of the most brutal things that can be done to humans, including rape, one of the most deplorable crimes that can be inflicted on another person. The films I'm discussing are rough to watch, and if you came for the nudity this time around, you may need to find a phone book and get yourself to a really good psychiatrist as soon as possible.

That said, do you remember the first time you saw John Boorman's *DELIVERANCE*? Do you remember the feeling of needing a shower when the final credits were rolling? I know I did. When I saw the film, I had no idea what I was in for. I had never heard of it, and to be honest, I was

# STRANGE LOVE

By BRIAN STEWARD

## Here, There Be Monsters...

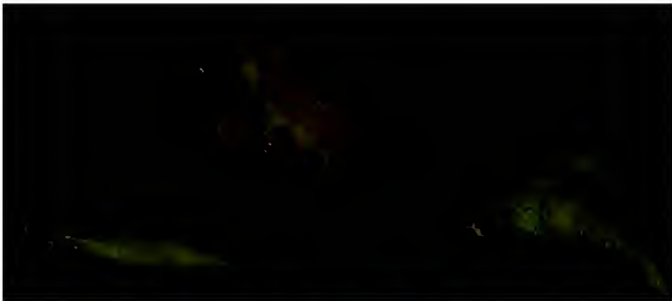
quite young, and the movie stayed with me for quite some time. The visceral nature of that "man against the wild" survival story, juxtaposed against beautiful landscapes, stands among the best cinematic works in history. Yet, the rape of Ned Betty's character Bobby takes it to another place entirely. A filthy, dark place we are still,

to this day, rarely taken on film, with such unapologetic imagery.

As the character of Drew is unable to help his friend for what seems like an eternity to him, it also seems like one to the viewer. Boorman directs the scene in a way that plays out with agonizing realism and leaves little to the imagination. Although the rapist is eventually killed, the damage to the characters and the viewer is done: The rape scene seems to linger in the air for the rest of the film in an almost palpable way. Not unlike the infamous original *I SPIT ON YOUR GRAVE* (a.k.a. *DAY OF*

*THE WOMAN*), the film presents the rape in a way that leaves the viewer, again, having to imagine very little regarding what is endured onscreen.

The rapists in *I SPIT ON YOUR GRAVE* are like cats playing with a wounded animal. Later, after Camille Keaton's character Jennifer heals somewhat, if only



physically, from her ordeal, we see torture, rape's filthy brother, rear its ugly head. When she enacts her revenge on those who hurt her, it feels justified, and it's no-holds-barred. Keaton's performance in *I SPIT ON YOUR GRAVE* is one of bravery and strength that few actresses would have even considered. Writer/director Meir Zarchi's story is indeed one of a woman's empowerment, but only after the ultimate victimization. One could argue that the rape in the film is simply a device to justify copious amounts of onscreen brutality.

The 2011 remake, unlike so many genre remakes, is one of the most brutally violent and tonally true-to-form films to ever come out of Hollywood's insatiable





need to revisit and regurgitate yesterday's cinema. Although the movie is somewhat different and updated for a new audience, the unimaginable pain of the protagonist is clear as she is left stripped of bare of everything, both mentally and physically, as the heroine of the original.

In these and other infamous films like *SALO, CALIGULA, THE LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT, IRREVERSIBLE, CANNIBAL HOLOCAUST* and *DEADGIRL*, rape and torture seem to be plot devices used to revolt yet trap audiences in moments that no person would ever want to endure. In most instances, as in *DELIVERANCE* and *I SPIT ON YOUR GRAVE*, the onscreen perpetrators are dealt some sort of revenge or brought to justice. If only it were always that way in real life.

What is it about seeing these moments play out on screen that audiences crave? What is the reason filmmakers choose this path? Is it the purest way to depict mankind at its lowest form? Is there a hidden part of some people's psyche that is fascinated with domination over others, that goes beyond the traditional scares in simple horror movie fare? Possibly. It's



interesting how many of these films have achieved cult followings, being so brutal and terrible to watch.

In today's society, you only need look in any random direction to find something that offends someone, yet strangely, it is also a world where even the more

recent so-called torture porn films, like the *HOSTEL* and *SAW* franchises, have attracted legions of fans. I wonder: Have we, as a society, become so numb to suffering and pain in cinema that rape and torture are now accepted as the last bastion of true horror?



# DANNING TRIUMPHANT!

By CHRIS ALEXANDER



**A**ustrian-born actress and cult-film goddess Sybil Danning has been an object of erotic obsession for generations of fantasy-flick fans. With her honey-blond locks, ample bosom, curves and ability to command the screen with authority, Danning's beauty is a fierce thing, and it has graced such beloved pictures as Luigi Cozzi's *HERCULES*, Emilio Miraglia's *THE RED QUEEN KILLS 7 TIMES*, Roger Corman's *BATTLE BEYOND THE STARS*, the legendary women-in-prison epic *CHAINED HEAT*, the classic B-flick *THE PHANTOM EMPIRE* and, of course, the completely insane, once derided, now beloved non-sequel *HOWLING II: YOUR SISTER IS A WERE-WOLF*. In fact, it is with the latter film, wherein Danning plays the wolf queen

Stirba, that history seems most to marry Danning's visage, and with very good reason. But more on that later...

Outside of the films, however, Danning is a humanitarian—a woman who genuinely cares about the world she lives in and the people in it, and has dedicated much of her time to lending a hand to those in need, using her persona as the hook to raise awareness of causes much bigger than any screen-locked illusion.

Danning talked to *DELIRIUM* about her current work with veterans, vampires, comic books and, of course, her time with the late, great Christopher Lee in Philippe Mora's inimitable *HOWLING II*.

**DELIRIUM:** I'd like to discuss your work with the Global Post Traumatic Stress

Injury foundation (GPTSI); you seem to very passionate about this cause...

**DANNING:** Yes, and thank you, it does indeed mean so much to me. There are several foundations out there that help families of vets who come back from the war and just cannot adjust, but what GPTSI—and we say "Global" as it is indeed a problem around the world, not just here—does is help those who are diagnosed with this injury. I say injury because once PTSD was considered a mental condition, a "disorder," when it is really a biological condition. Vets come home with this injury, and they cannot get to doctors or hospitals or anyone who will help them, as there is no help for anyone to give. They have an illness caused by the trauma of war, but beyond that, PTSD could also affect a woman who has been raped or a survivor of a serious car accident.

We are working with a noted doctor, Dr. Eugene Lipov, who has created a drug called the Chicago Block that has been using to successfully cure many vets, and this injection aids that part of your brain that has been damaged and is telling the victim to commit suicide. It curbs that impulse. Listen, on this very day, 22 vets are either committing suicide or close to it. I want to help treat these vets. I want to help save their lives.

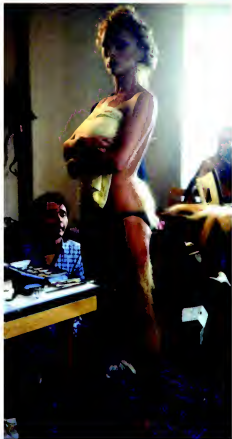
**DELIRIUM:** Do you find your name is aiding in getting attention to the foundation?

**DANNING:** Yes. I was born in Austria but I live here in Hollywood, and here, everyone is either pro- or anti-war, but that's irrelevant. Hollywood has always cared about people, and these vets are people. These are the 3 percent who fight for the other 97 percent, and we owe it to them to save their lives. I have had much support from Hollywood, and we're only in the early stages of our plans.

**DELIRIUM:** I recently saw a photo of you and Stan Lee together. Do you have a friendship?

**DANNING:** We have had a wonderful relationship for years. And if we had met in another dimension, we would have been married, I think [laughs]. I'm a fan, and he's been a fan of mine since I've been in this country. I met him at a show recently, and he and I started talking about a project I'm working on. The working title is *BLOOD RELATIONS*, and the script is kind of a combination of *THE HOWLING* and *TWILIGHT*, but darker and more sexual. So I told Stan about it and he wants to be in it, but only if I can bite him. So Stan is going to be in it and I'll bite him [laughs]. We're tweaking the script, and I'm making the film one of my priorities this year.

**DELIRIUM:** You also had a long relationship with another Lee, which brings us to *HOWLING II*...



**DANNING:** Ah, yes. Dear Christopher. I was like his second wife [laughs] because he was married to my best friend, Gitte. And Gitte, well, she did everything I did, meaning drinking, smoking, gambling, but Christopher did none of that. Anyway, when we were in the Czech Republic making *HOWLING II*, we spent our evenings in a restaurant, and there was always this guy there who we knew was KGB, because they were still behind the Iron Curtain at the time. It was wild.





One night, we were there after I had to go through that famous makeup process that took eight hours, where they had all that hair glued on me from the feet up. They put strings of fine, beautiful eyelashes on me, essentially, and that was only for that one scene, the werewolf threesome. It was a black chick, a blonde chick, a guy with black hair...I ended up covered in black hair. A real wild *ménage à trois*. Taking that off was even worse, because my skin was burning. But anyway, we were relaxing, eating and drinking in the restaurant, and Christopher said, "You

know, my dahhhhhing, you must always be true to your character; fans will love you if you are true and respectful to that character, no matter what." He was right, of course...

**DELIRIUM:** And I think Stirba has become iconic because you do take her seriously. That's why I loved the film as a kid.

**DANNING:** You saw *HOWLING II* as a kid? I hope we didn't injure your mind... we might have to call Dr. Lipov [laughs]!

**DELIRIUM:** I was old enough. And despite the terrible reviews, I never thought it was bad. I just thought it was weird...

**DANNING:** Well, you have to understand that we were weird people in a weird country in a weird castle with weird KGB guys around...how could it not be weird!

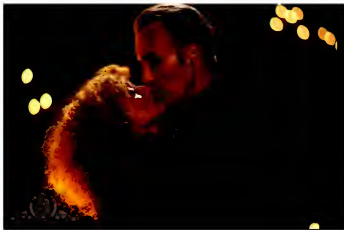
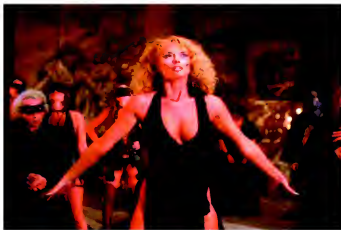
**DELIRIUM:** Now, what can you tell us about your new comic-book series, *RUGER*?

**DANNING:** *RUGER* is based on my character from the film I made in the '80s called *L.A. BOUNTY*. That film did very well and was the first U.S. movie that went into Russia, along with *RAMBO* and *COMMANDO*. I don't own the movie, but I own the character. *RUGER* is published by an independent, Scar Tactic Graphics, and I'm very happy to be working with them. They will be released first at Horror-



Rama, and I'm absolutely thrilled with the series. So many things going on, and all of them exciting. I continue to love life!

For more information about Danning's humanitarian work, visit [www.GPTSI.org](http://www.GPTSI.org), and check out the Sybil-verse at [www.SybilDanning.net](http://www.SybilDanning.net).





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## WHEN BAD PUPPETS TURN GOOD!

Toulon's Puppets for once, are about to do something good. As the bad puppets turn good! The mini-menaces Blade, Tunneler and Pinhead, go toe-to-toe with their most menacing enemy yet—a team of terrifying, gremlin-like creatures known as “Totems” that are sent by the evil Egyptian demon Sutekh to recapture the magic stolen by Toulon.

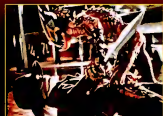
The demons target a young scientist, Rick who is now in possession of the Puppet Masters secrets.

As the creatures attempt to terminate his research and regain the “secret of life,” they leave a deadly path of destruction until the evil Totems finally find Toulon's puppets in their way.

However, Rick has a secret weapon on his side and the newest head-swapping puppet... Decapitron!

## SPECIAL FEATURES:

VIDEOZONE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTARY BY JEFF BURR



FULL MOON UNIVERSE PRESENTS PUPPET MASTER 4

STARRING GORDON CURRIE CHANORA WEST JASON ADAMS TERESA HILL AND GUY ROLFE AS TOULON

SCREENPLAY BY TODD HENSCHALL STEVEN E. CARR JD DUFFY AND DOUG AARNIKOSKI & KEITH PAYSON

BASED ON AN ORIGINAL IDEA BY CHARLES BAND DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY ADOLFO BARTOLLI A.I.C. MUSIC COMPOSED BY RICHARD BAND

PUPPET EFFECTS CREATED BY DAVID ALLEN PRODUCTIONS PRODUCTION DESIGNER MILD ONE PRODUCER KEITH PAYSON

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER CHARLES BAND DIRECTED BY JEFF BURR



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The omnibus horror movie can sometimes be a mixed bag of goodies when not executed properly. When a feature-length film brewing a collection of short stories gets it right, the end result is a vignette-filled, more-bang-for-your-buck horror show where more than one subgenre takes center court.

If Stephen King, George A. Romero, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Michael McDowell sat around a campfire swapping macabre tales that included a famished witch, a ticked-off mummy, an evil cat and a hot-to-trot gargoyle, every connoisseur of sanguinary delights would line up in droves to hear it. Well, gather around, because the demented minds and pens of those gentlemen come together as one in **TALES FROM THE DARKSIDE: THE MOVIE**, directed by longtime composer John Harrison, who gives **DELIRIUM** a comprehensive look back at the making of his masterful opus.

**DELIRIUM:** You directed a number of episodes of the hit **TALES** television series. How were you chosen to be behind the camera for the feature film?

**JOHN HARRISON:** I can't really give you a solid answer on that. I had known George A. Romero and his partner, Richard Rubinstein, all through the '70s and '80s when we were doing projects in Pittsburgh. When George was doing **CREEPSHOW**, Richard called me up because there was a problem with the Los Angeles assistant directors who had been brought in to work on the show; they didn't quite jibe with George. Back then, it was a very independent method of filmmaking; we were not Hollywood by any means. I think that the structuralism that

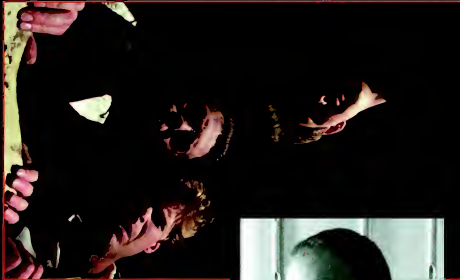
# LIFE ON THE DARKSIDE

By JASON BENE

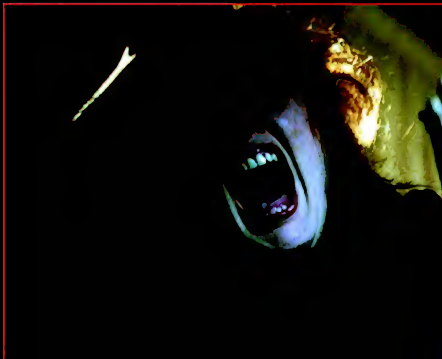
those guys brought to the table was a little alien to the way George liked to work. Richard called me up and said, "Hey, would you come down and be George's assistant director?" I said, "Richard, I don't know anything about being an assis-

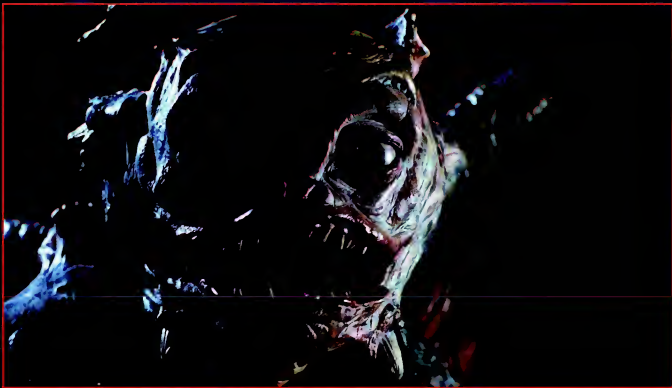
tant director." He said, "Don't worry about any of the technical stuff; we have a guy who will handle all the SAG, the union stuff, the paperwork and the bureaucracy. What we really need is someone who is close to George, a friend of his, who can manage the set and keep the production moving forward." I had my own film production company at the time with my two partners; I wasn't alien to the process. Rubinstein said, "All I need you to do is translate what George wants to do to the crew and keep the ball rolling." I said, "OK, I'll do it."

That then led to **DAY OF THE DEAD** and the continuing working relationship. George always knew that I wanted to direct, and that was sort of my career goal. I never went to film school; I never came up through that routine. I had not come to Hollywood or New York, even



though I lived in both of those places when I was a musician. I had never come up through those ranks, so I figured the only way I was going to get directing assignments was to write. I taught myself the screenwriting craft. I don't know if I was any good at the time, but I was learning, so they knew that I could write and that I wanted to direct. My wife and I had moved to Los Angeles by the time the show came along. This was post-**CREEPSHOW**. They had two productions going, one in Los Angeles and one in New





York. These were really low-budget operations that were not DGA, but they were Writers Guild. They needed people they could trust to come in on these shoestring budgets to get the thing in the can and get the show on the air. I guess because of my relationship with them in the past, they trusted me to be that kind of guy. I was in Los Angeles, so it was a no-brainer. Once I had done one, they asked me to do more, and that included writing them and doing the music for them. I had done scores for George's movies, so they knew I could do

it. It was a way for me to protect the project I was doing. We did four seasons of DARKSIDE, and I directed around eight segments. I got nominated for a Writers Guild Award one year for one of my favorites.

At this time, Richard was trying to get a movie going, because the television show was successful. He may have been thinking in the back of his mind that they should try to do this as a movie because CREEPSHOW as an anthology was successful, so maybe DARKSIDE could be.

What he did say was, "Look, I'd like to bring you to New York and have you work with the New York crew, because we have a crew up here and I'm kind of cross-pollinating the two production entities." It may have been his way of introducing me to a lot of that team in order to see whether this would work with me directing.

It turned out to be one of my favorite DARKSIDE episodes, called "Everybody Needs a Little Love." It was very film noir; I talked them into doing it almost as a period piece. We shot it in black and



FOUR GHOULISH FABLES IN ONE MODERN NIGHTMARE.



# TALES FROM THE DARKSIDE THE MOVIE

PARAMOUNT PICTURES PRESENTS A RICHARD P. RUBINSTEIN PRODUCTION TALES FROM THE DARKSIDE: THE MOVIE. STARRING CHRISTIAN SLATER • DAVID JOHANSEN • WILLIAM HICKEY • JAMES REMAR • RAE DAWN CHONG. DIRECTED BY DICK SMITH. COSTUME DESIGNER DAVID R. KAPPEL. EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS MICHAEL McDOWELL AND SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE. PRODUCED BY STEPHEN KING. WRITTEN BY MICHAEL McDOWELL. DIRECTED BY RICHARD P. RUBINSTEIN AND MITCHELL GALIN. CASTING BY JOHN HARRISON. A PARAMOUNT PICTURE.

white. I had a really fine cinematographer named Robert Draper, and he's fantastic. I've worked with him several times. It turned out to be a great episode with Jerry Orbach and Richard Portnow. It was my favorite episode of all the ones I did.

Around that time, I began to hear rumors they were trying to do a film. I really didn't know what it was about. I didn't know whether they had the money to do it properly. It could have gone the way of a straight-to-video movie with a real low budget, just to cash in on it. I was kind of nervous about that. Then nothing happened for a couple of years. I just kind of forgot about it. I did another pilot for Richard called NIGHT ROSE: AKHIBAR'S DAUGHTER, which was going to be a Zalman King kind of tale of sex and revenge. HBO had commissioned it, but they never aired it. It was pretty pornographic, actually [laughs]. I think it was too hard for

them. Then I was doing other things and got a call saying, "Hey, we got the money. Do you want to do this?" It actually was not Paramount at the time, although Richard had them in his back pocket knowing it would be a pickup. That's how I got the job!

DELIRIUM: Was there any point in time when TALES FROM THE DARKSIDE: THE MOVIE was going to be CREEPSHOW 3?

HARRISON: No, no. That has always been a rumor floating around. Some people thought that was the case. There was a story or two that George and Richard had commissioned because they were thinking about doing sequels to CREEPSHOW. But it was never meant to be CREEPSHOW 3. It was always going to have its own identity because the television show was so successful.

DELIRIUM: Wasn't "Cat from Hell" origi-

nally supposed to be in CREEPSHOW 2? HARRISON: This is where it gets confusing, because as far as I know, nobody ever said this was going to be for CREEPSHOW and that was going to be for DARKSIDE. "Cat" is a segment George adapted from one of Stephen King's stories, so I can't honestly tell you. There may have been a point in time when they were thinking about shooting it as part of CREEPSHOW 2. I honestly don't think there was ever a serious CREEPSHOW 3 planned. There may have been talk about it, but there was never a serious plan. A script was never commissioned. A production was never started. I know other people who bought the rights have done another CREEPSHOW, but I've never seen it. DARKSIDE never started out as CREEPSHOW 3. It was always DARKSIDE from the beginning! From the moment I was hired to the moment I showed up in New York and we put the production together, that was always what it was.

DELIRIUM: Why was it decided to not use the famous opening credits from the television series?

HARRISON: I don't think there were any copyright issues or anything like that. Richard and Mitchell [Galín, producer] didn't want it to feel like it was just a bigger version of the television show. They wanted it to feel like a movie. The knock on anthology movies is they don't make any money, and people don't like them because they are three shorts and they don't hang together as one single film. I think the decision was made to distance ourselves from the show, and to say this is a feature-length movie and not a bigger version of the television show.

DELIRIUM: It was a nice touch to bring in actors Christian Slater, Debbie Harry and William Hickey, because they were all veterans of the series. The key to any good anthology flick is a solid wrap-around story, and Harry is pivotal as the suburban witch who is holding a young boy hostage in a Hansel and Gretel-style scenario. Whose idea was that?

HARRISON: I think that was Tom Allen and Mitchell Galín's idea. Tom Allen was the story editor on all the DARKSIDE television shows. Every writer who worked on DARKSIDE worked with Tom Allen. Unfortunately, he is no longer with us. He was a Catholic priest, believe it or not. Actually, I don't know whether he was a priest; he was a brother. He was part of some brotherhood and he lived with the brothers. He was a wonderful guy; very creative and smart. I believe that it was him and Michael McDowell's idea, but Mitchell Galín was the executive producer with Richard; they were part of New Amsterdam Entertainment. He and Michael cooked it up.

DELIRIUM: No pun intended [laughs].

HARRISON: [Laughs] Yes, I'm sorry! I'd have to give Michael McDowell the credit with Mitchell and Tom Allen. As I'm saying this, I think I ought to correct myself.





I'm not sure how much Tom had to do at that point with the movie. He may have been gone by then, although his influence was there in terms of the stories.

And you talk about the casting... We were really lucky. I mean, that casting team, they were unbelievable! Christian was a big star by then. HEATHERS had already come out, and he had done a DARKSIDE, so he had a relationship with the company and was willing to do it. Debbie was a New York girl and was trying to launch an acting career. William Hickey was great, and then we got David Johansen. Then this beautiful redhead came in one day for "Lot 249" story named Julianne Moore, for Christ's sake.

DELIRIUM: And you cast Steve Buscemi before he really took off.

HARRISON: Buscemi came in and nailed the audition! I took one look at him and said, "Don't bring anyone else in." He and I got along great. We haven't seen each other for a long time, but I love Steve. He's fantastic! Those three made "Lot 249" really great. And then we had Hickey and Johansen for "Cat from Hell," of course.

We struggled with "Lover's Vow"; we didn't know quite what to do. I wanted James Remar, and Richard was a friend of Rae Dawn Chong. They had places up in the New York countryside; they were neighbors and they would get together up there. He said, "What do you think about Rae Dawn for 'Lover's Vow'?" And I said, "Yeah, man. First of all, she's gorgeous. She's a good actress. Let's do it!"

Then I had to talk everybody into James Remar. James had had kind of a bumpy road at that time. I had seen him in THE WARRIORS and a bunch of other stuff. He's a fantastic actor! He was having a little bit of a tough time, but he was really making a comeback. I called Rae Dawn and said, "Hey, this is kind of an off-beat idea, but what would you think of James Remar as your lover in 'Lover's Vow'?" She said, "I love James Remar! I'd love to work with him!" So that kind of put it over the top. Nobody gave us any crap at the time about the interracial part. In fact, we didn't even mention it. We made no allusion to it. We didn't talk about it. We didn't adjust the story to make any accommodation for it. We just took it for granted, and it worked fantastic!

DELIRIUM: James Remar was great as Dexter's father for eight seasons on the hit Showtime series DEXTER.

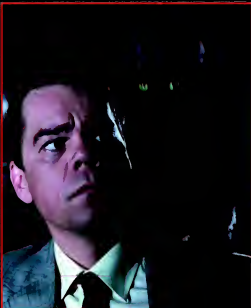
HARRISON: Oh God, yes! Well, he's had a great career. He was in SEX AND THE

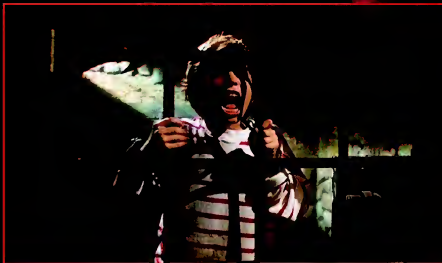


CITY for many years too. He pops up all over the place. He's just a terrific actor. When I was doing TALES FROM THE CRYPT, which was after DARKSIDE, the producers came to me and said, "What do you think about James Remar for this part?" It was for an episode called "Easel Kill Ya." I said, "Well, this role is very similar to the one I had him do in TALES FROM THE DARKSIDE: THE MOVIE." They said, "You know, you are kind of right." I'm not sure if they talked to him about it or not, but they ended up giving him a CRYPT with Whoopi Goldberg.

DELIRIUM: "Dead Wait," directed by Tobe Hooper.

HARRISON: They asked me to use a young Brit that nobody had heard of by the name of Tim Roth. So I got Roth to do "Easel Kill Ya" and James was shooting "Dead Wait" with Tobe on the next stage.





I went over and said, "Hey, James, I would have done anything with you, but I thought maybe this role was too similar to 'Lover's Vow.' " We laughed about it. It was kind of cool.

**DELIRIUM:** [Laughs] Did William Hickey and David Johansen have a few drinks on set?

**HARRISON:** Well, there were rumors. Those two guys were total pros. All I will say about that is we had a dressing room in the mansion where we shot "Cat from Hell." We'd always be wondering, where's Bill and David? They would always be down in his dressing room, and you could hear them laughing and joking and all this stuff. And, of course, Johansen had this big, big voice that you could hear all over the mansion. You could hear him cackling down there. I won't say that I personally observed it; I just saw the end result [laughs]. They were having a great time. Bill was not really well at that point; he was not feeling too good.

Robert Draper and I came up with a very theatrical style for that particular episode. The plan on *DARKSIDE* was to have every story look different. For example, we used a very Technicolor, *RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK* look for "Lot 249";

that was very intentional. We went for much more monochromatic and harsh lighting for "Cat from Hell," almost black and white. Then we used a much softer approach for "Lover's Vow," which was the romantic story, of course. Each of those stories had a very different style and look. There is one particular scene where the old lady comes down the stairs after the cat has tripped her, and she crushes her head on the ground. We changed the lighting scheme, and then we brought Bill and David in from the right and left of the camera. They had to be on swivel seats that were very uncomfortable, and we almost had to bring them nose-to-nose, so they could say their lines about what happened next. It was a very tricky scene for timing and their discomfort, and we had to do it a number of times. But they were great; they had been down in that dressing room for the past hour, right [laughs]?

**DELIRIUM:** The point-of-view of the cat is really effective, since they are like humans who are colorblind and see only some colors, but not all of them.

**HARRISON:** That was intentional. We used a smear effect on the edges of the lens. We would mount the lens in different rooms and put that smear effect on it, and

it looked pretty creepy.

**DELIRIUM:** It was a nice surprise to see a mummy at the center of attention of a horror film, because at the time, slasher films were the bread and butter of the genre.

**HARRISON:** We wanted it to look like an old-fashioned movie. There are a couple scenes in there where I posed the actors as if they were in a magazine shot.

**DELIRIUM:** The juxtaposition from one scene to the next is seamless. One moment, this guy gets his brains yanked out of his nose with a wire hanger and you hear it but don't see it, you just see the aftermath, and then there is a graphic kill where Julianne Moore's character gets sliced down the back with a pair of scissors and has flowers shoved into her wound.

**HARRISON:** I guess I'm kind of old-fashioned that way. I've never been a fan of slasher movies, or their younger brothers, torture porn. I just don't get it. I came up with movies like *THE HAUNTING* and all of the Val Lewton films. They scared the crap out of me, because the unknown was far more frightening than the in-your-face gore. It is funny I should say that, having worked for Romero all this time, but George had a way of doing it somewhat tongue-in-cheek. In *DAWN OF THE DEAD* and *DAY OF THE DEAD*, there is plenty of gore, but it is all in the context of storytelling. I prefer classic horror. When we were doing *DARKSIDE*, we obviously had to accommodate the gore and violence because that's part of it. I'm not saying I wouldn't do that, but I think it has to be in context. I think suspense makes horror better than in-your-face shock.

**DELIRIUM:** The guys at KNB EFX Group were really coming into their own at this time, and they delivered the goods. The two showstoppers are the cat tunneling down David Johansen's mouth and later bursting out, and the "You promised you'd never tell!" gargoyle reveal.

**HARRISON:** We had to really struggle to make those things work. I was really lucky. I knew Greg [Nicotero] and Howard [Berger] and Bob [Kurtzman] were getting together, and I wanted them to do the show because they were young and up-and-coming. We were all hungry, and it wasn't about money; it was about, can we do a great thing? Richard made a very calculated business decision to get the master involved, Dick Smith. KNB were thrilled they could work with this guy. He was brought on as a consultant to make sure that we were getting what we wanted. It was sort of an insurance policy for Richard. They brought their stuff up to Dick and he said, "You guys know what you're doing; I don't even need to be here!" He gave them his blessing, and off we went.

**DELIRIUM:** Considering the low budget of your film, grossing \$16 million at the box office was not too shabby.

**HARRISON:** George and I have had this argument with the studios forever. We



love the format, but the studios didn't want to hear it. They didn't think it was financially worthy. CREEPSHOW made money. I think CREEPSHOW 2 actually turned a profit. I know DARKSIDE was profitable.

DELIRIUM: Paramount had just released PET SEMATARY the year before, and perhaps they were looking for another King-sized hit.

HARRISON: I thought they did a pretty good job promoting the film. You're always hoping they will throw more money into the advertising. I can't tell whether Paramount could have done a little more. It was in the theaters for five weeks. It did well overseas.

DELIRIUM: Was there ever a discussion about doing a sequel?

HARRISON: Not really. Again, we were up against the bias against anthologies. I don't think it was such a hit out of the park financially that they wanted to do another one.

DELIRIUM: This year is the 25th anniversary of TALES FROM THE DARKSIDE: THE MOVIE. Perhaps now would be a good time to hit up Paramount for a special-edition Blu-ray release.

HARRISON: I'll probably bring it up to Paramount at some point. I talked them into doing a DVD release back when I was doing DUNE. I knew the guy who was in distribution, and I pulled him aside one day and said, "You have a movie in your property that has never been released on DVD, and you really should do a special edition." I got that ball rolling. George and I did the commentary. I brought it over to this place where they did the video transfer, and they really made it beautiful. I would love to see Paramount do a Blu-ray release.



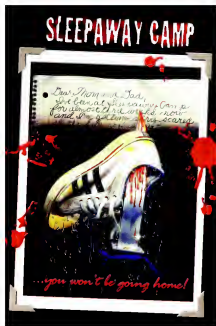
# LADIES OF THE 80s

Filmmaker and B-movie god David DeCoteau's continuing adventures hanging out with the '80s' greatest ladies.

## FELISSA ROSE (SLEEPAWAY CAMP)

**DELIRIUM:** Can you believe that SLEEPAWAY CAMP has become a cult classic? You were a young girl when you made the film. Did you realize that it would gain such a cult following?

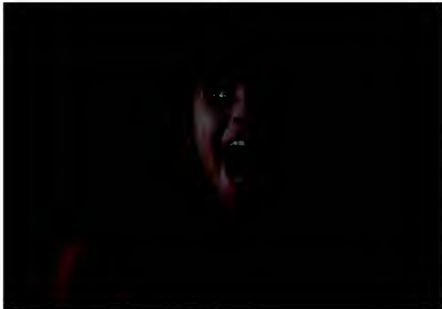
**ROSE:** I cannot believe it! It's been the most amazing experience of my life. 33 years later and we're still chatting about this flick! It really took us by surprise, and



we had the best time making it.

**DELIRIUM:** SLEEPAWAY CAMP also has a huge gay following. Why do you think that is?

**ROSE:** I really believe the ending was quite a shocker and gave people that extra special piece they love! It's a twisted and creepy flick and has kids killing kids, so that was pretty provocative for the time. Slashers were so captivating during the early '80s, and we hit at the right time.



By DAVID DeCOTEAU

**DELIRIUM:** Were you asked to participate in the sequel?

**ROSE:** I was, but it just didn't work out, as I decided to go to NYU and they loved Pam Springsteen. She's awesome in it!

**DELIRIUM:** The director of SLEEPAWAY CAMP hasn't done much since the movie came out. Tell us about Robert Hiltzik.

**ROSE:** He's a dear friend and is so talented! Hopefully we will team up to do a remake. He's a very special person and an amazing family man. He became an attorney, but would love to revisit SC once again. Fingers crossed!

**DELIRIUM:** You are working quite a lot now. Tell us about what you are up to.

**ROSE:** I've been lucky to work in the horror genre for many years. I'm now producing with Carolco Pictures as well as being married to Deron Miller with three incredible kids. Life is fun, baby!

## DONNA WILKES (ANGEL)

**DELIRIUM:** We met on the movie ANGEL in 1983. I was the craft service boy! Remember how I used to bring you coffee for those late nights on Hollywood Boulevard?

**WILKES:** ANGEL was a blur. We were working so fast that I really needed to be focused, but I have to say that Dick Shawn and Susan Tyrell—God rest their souls—always kept me laughing. We had so many colorful characters on the set, it never got boring—on the contrary. A lot of our scenes chasing through Hollywood Boulevard were a little too close to reality! At times, a lot of people did not know we were shooting a movie. All they saw was this little girl in high heels with a big gun chasing after a Hare Krishna! It's a wonder we didn't get tackled by some courageous bystander.

**DELIRIUM:** You are also known for JAWS 2. A great screamer, you were!

**WILKES:** JAWS 2 was a tough shoot on many levels. First, the pressure of the tremendous success of JAWS, and then the budget for JAWS 2 was out of this world for its time. The "Amity kids" knew they had a humongous opportunity, and the pressure that came along with it was very high. Not to mention the pressure of being young adults and dealing with romances, jealousies, drugs and the most difficult location to film—the ocean—along with a not-so-cooperative great white [mockup]. We were wet and cold most of the time, and some of us would throw up over the side of the boats after a night of heavy partying. It was a long shoot, and I heard that one crewmember's wife committed suicide during the shoot.



# JAWS 2



We also had a few celebrities on the shoot. Susan Ford, President Ford's daughter, came to photograph the shoot, and John Dukakis, stepson of Michael Dukakis, who later ran for President, was in the cast. Ben Marley's dad John Marley



came to visit him. He was famous for the GODFATHER scene where they put a dead horse's head in bed with him.

**DELIRIUM:** It was great reuniting with you on our two new movies, 90210 SHARK ATTACK! and MY STEPBROTHER IS A VAMPIRE...

**WILKES:** It was fun getting my feet wet again in the two movies we did. I had a blast, and couldn't think of a better person than you to experience that with! I love you, David!

## LAUREN LONDON (MANIAC COP)

**DELIRIUM:** Can you believe that MANIAC COP is so beloved?

**LONDON:** No, I never would have dreamed—maybe had a nightmare or two that MANIAC COP would become a cult classic. People all over



the world seem to love that trilogy to this day. I happen to see a lot of similarities between MANIAC COP and GONE WITH THE WIND—because that's what happens

to you when you encounter Matt Cordell...

**DELIRIUM:** You work frequently with the legendary Larry Cohen. How long have you two been collaborating?

**LONDON:** Off and on for years. Larry mostly writes by himself. He is the great-

stories.

**LONDON:** He was a very dedicated director and a tyrant. I used to call him Otto, after Otto Preminger. I was obsessed with him in my early 20s. Poor Matt. He wanted to strangle me every day on that film. I used to stalk him. That's how sick I was. That's OK, because during the second film we did together called YELLOW HAIR AND THE FORTRESS OF GOLD, my

obsession got worse! We shot both films in the gorgeous Almeria and Segovia, Spain, where they filmed CONAN. Hundra is a female Conan, but tougher.

**DELIRIUM:** You are working quite a lot now. Tell us about what you are up to. I enjoyed working with you on 1313: HERCULES UNBOUND...

**LONDON:** Thank God all these directors and producers have cataracts and must be hard of hearing [laughs]! I'm so grateful to have just done five films back to back—and one I just turned down because I had a heart-breaking death in my family. My cat King Kong, who was 15 years old,



est gift to the cinema, and my respect for him is immeasurable. We both love suspense films, thrillers and comedies.

**DELIRIUM:** Your Matt Cimber movies also have a huge following. Why do you think that is?

**LONDON:** Perhaps it's because my character in HUNDRA kicks a lot of ass, and men secretly want to be whipped and dominated. Something I enjoy doing in my spare time...

**DELIRIUM:** Tell us some Matt Cimber

died, and I had a mental breakdown. I love animals—more than people. They don't judge or hold a grudge. They don't care if you have wrinkles or pimples. They love you unconditionally. In addition, I didn't want to play a bloody newscaster anyway and talk to a wall.

I love independent films, because you get the creative license to alter the pre-existing text and grammar and make the words on the page come alive and become a very weird person. I love that. I just completed SAMURAI COP 2, FUTURE PUNKS, SKY, opposite the amazing Diane Kruger, as a Bunny Girl on the Vegas strip who's lost her mind. Charlene is very funny and tragic at the same time. Pitiful,



actually, like me. Then there's ELECTRIC BOOGALOO, and SYNDICATE SMASHER, where I'm one of the leads. I play Defective—yes, *Defective* Carol Driscoll, who's obsessed with nailing the head mobster in the film, Russell Dippolito, who whacked the love of my life. I pursue him with such ardent fervor and passionate paroxysm that I really crossed the line between acting and insanity. I think half the crew quit when they saw my temper. This occurs on most films I'm hired to do. Next up is WHEN THE STORM GOD RIDES, a Western where I get to be gussied up as a sexy saloon owner. I must thank my incredible friend and manager Joe Williamson, without whom this angel would have plummeted into an abyss, never to return.

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# Tanya's Toy Chest

## "Hammer Horror Masterpiece Collection"

By **TANYA TATE**

**A**s a Hammer horror fan, I had been eagerly awaiting the release of the two new additions to Titan Merchandise's line of collectible maxi busts. This second wave in the series consists of horror icons I'm sure you are all familiar with: Christopher Lee and Peter Cushing, names that are virtually synonymous with Hammer Films.

The three-quarter-length busts are from Hammer's 1957 film *THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN*. It's important to note

ingly detailed. There is a nice texture to his ratty peacoat, and his waist and wrist restraints are present as though the monster has just made an escape. With his arms outreached, he is ready to get his hands on his next victim!

The incredible detail on these busts is simply jaw-dropping. Clearly, a lot of effort went into ensuring that not only did these figures look like Lee and Cushing, but that they captured the emotion of the characters. These are an easy win, and definitely must-haves for horror fans.

The first wave of these figures included Lee as Count Dracula, Cushing as his nemesis Van Helsing and Ingrid Pitt as the deliciously evil Countess Dracula. This trio is virtually sold out everywhere and, when available, command a high figure on the secondary market. If there is to be a third wave (and I hope that there will be), good choices would be Oliver Reed's lycanthrope from *CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF*, Christopher Lee as *THE MUMMY* and maybe Valerie Leon from *BLOOD FROM THE MUMMY'S TOMB*.

Victor Von Frankenstein and Frankenstein's Monster are currently available from Titan Merchandise.

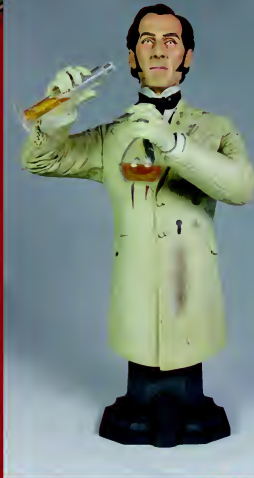
For all things Tanya Tate, go to [www.tanyatate.xxx](http://www.tanyatate.xxx).



that this was Hammer's first color horror film, as it became an important part of the legacy the company created, and its impact on Gothic horror. Both of these busts are roughly 8 inches tall and are limited to 1,000 pieces each.

Cushing starred as the evil Baron Frankenstein, and here we see him in his lab coat stained with the concoctions of chemicals he's mixing—or is that a bit of blood from the corpses he's been patching together? The bust expertly captures Cushing's look, and really delivers the madman in polystone form.

Frankenstein's creation, as portrayed by Lee, looks brilliantly horrific. The look of despair on the monster's face is amaz-



I have had the pleasure over the years of knowing and interviewing many genre personalities, both behind and in front of the camera. I recently interviewed British director Pete Walker in front of an audience of his fans at a screening on Sept. 9, 2015 at the classic Egyptian Theater in Hollywood of two of his films: *SCHIZO* and *HOUSE OF THE LONG SHADOWS*. *HOUSE* was the last feature Walker would ever make, while *SCHIZO* represents the period of his most creative output, when he directed some of the most popular nasties of English horror.

Walker is a no-nonsense guy with a wicked sense of humor, and he quickly put to rest any notions of making another film by saying, "I retired because the filmmaking process no longer was fun and the cost was way too high, plus I simply lost the desire to get up at 4 in the morning to freeze in some ungodly location with actors who were just as uncomfortable as I was...plus I really don't care for the kind of films I was being offered when I retired some two decades ago."

If *HOUSE OF THE LONG SHADOWS* was to be his final film, Walker went out with style. His cast included Vincent Price, Christopher Lee, Peter Cushing and



## "BRITISH BLOODSLINGERS"

By DAVID DEL VALLE

was updated by Michael Armstrong, the director of *MARK OF THE DEVIL*, the gory witchfinder film that was infamous for distributing vomit bags to patrons who had the nerve to sit through it. There was certainly no need for any of that with *HOUSE*, as it plays out as a very old-fash-

ioned men, especially Price, who had so many great stories of old Hollywood to tell, as did Carradine. Of course, Cushing and Lee represented British horror from the days of Hammer and beyond, and it was thrilling to be in their company. When I asked Walker about Keith, who shocked British audiences with her performance in his 1974 cannibal film *FRIGHTMARE*, Walker simply replied, "Sheila was a pro and did whatever I asked without hesitation. She replaced Elsa Lanchester in *HOUSE OF THE LONG SHADOWS* because Elsa was too ill to cross the ocean to work in a drafty old house in Wales. So we got Sheila, who steals every scene she is in...audiences loved her, and so did the camera."

According to Walker, I chose his worst picture to show that evening. I had originally wanted to show *FRIGHTMARE* after *SHADOWS*, but a 35mm print could not be found, so we used a 16mm of *SCHIZO*, which was patterned a bit after *PSYCHO* without the same results. Walker always felt it was too much of a letdown, like a "dime-store Hitchcock," as he liked to refer to it. He did enjoy the girls in the picture, especially Lynne Fredericks—Mrs. Peter Sellers!

The highlight of the evening was Walker discussing his early years as a stand-up comic in '50s Britain, where, as he recalled, "I was simply no good, and would never have made a go, so I think I did the right thing getting behind the camera. After all, all I really wanted to do was create a bit of mischief."

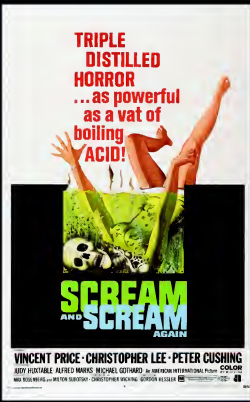
Gordon Hessler was also a director of British horror films around the same time



John Carradine. The infamous character actress Sheila Keith, long a staple in Walker's horror films, rounded out the cast of veteran icons. This was not a typical Walker horror movie, since it had very little of the over-the-top sexuality and gore that made him a legend among British genre fans of the '70s and '80s. The film was based on a play from the '20s, *SEVEN KEYS TO BALDPATE*, and

ioned old-dark-house thriller in the grand manner of Boris Karloff's early follow-up to *FRANKENSTEIN*, *THE OLD DARK HOUSE*, another adaptation of *SEVEN KEYS*. In fact, said Walker, "We wanted to do *THE OLD DARK HOUSE*, but simply could not get the rights, so we made our very own version set in a thunderstorm in Wales."

Walker loved working with these tal-







as Walker, and both men worked with Price and Lee; yet they were decidedly different craftsmen in the way they went about displaying those horrors on the screen. Gordon was a producer of the ALFRED HITCHCOCK HOUR TV show in the '60s and moved his way up, working on the over-budgeted DE SADE for American International Pictures, and then replacing the late Michael Reeves (of

## SCHIZOPHRENIA...

When the left hand doesn't know  
what the right hand is doing!



## SCHIZO

A PETE WALKER PRODUCTION. STARRING VINCENT PRICE, CHRISTOPHER LEE, PETER CUSHING, JOHN CARRADINE, SHEILA KEITH, JULIE PEASGOOD, and RICHARD TODD. Produced by MENAHEM GOLAN. Screenplay by MICHAEL ARMSTRONG. Directed by PETE WALKER.

WITCHFINDER GENERAL fame) after the young director was found dead of a drug overdose prior to filming THE OBLONG BOX, which would star both Price and Lee. He would go on to direct

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A nightmare in every room.



VINCENT PRICE CHRISTOPHER LEE PETER CUSHING  
In a GULAM GLOBUS Production of a PETE WALKER Film

# House of the Long Shadows

STARRING JOHN CARRADINE SHEILA KEITH  
JULIE PEASGOOD  
and RICHARD TODD

A murderously funny  
mystery with a twist...

DESI ARNAZ, Jr.

Produced by MENAHEM GOLAN, with YORAM GLOBUS

Screenplay by MICHAEL ARMSTRONG

Directed by PETE WALKER

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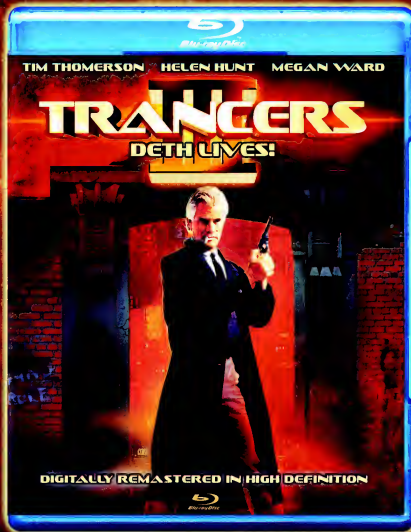
SCREAM AND SCREAM AGAIN, starring three horror icons also seen in HOUSE OF THE LONG SHADOWS: Price, Lee and Cushing.

Hessler was a charming man who loved golden-age Hollywood and tried to make the very best of what he was given to work with by AIP at the time. He wanted to adapt novels to film, and felt his best movie was 1988's THE GIRL IN A SWING, which was a well-done ghost story that did not get seen by enough fans. His two AIP films that were taken and recut are now available the way Hessler shot them: CRY OF THE BANSHIEE and MURDERS IN THE RUE MORGUE are on DVD in true director's cuts, and thank-

fully, he lived to see these movies properly released before his death in 2013.

Both Pete Walker and Gordon Hessler were gentlemen of horror and old-school directors who influenced a lot of younger filmmakers, and their movies will live on as long as we have screens on which to watch them. Both SCREAM AND SCREAM AGAIN (from Scream Factory) and HOUSE OF THE LONG SHADOWS (Kino Lorber) are now available on Blu-ray with commentaries by yours truly. Watch them and find out why Price asked Hessler, upon receiving his script for SCREAM AND SCREAM AGAIN, "All right, Gordon, which scream am I this time around?"

# THE END OF TIME IS JUST THE BEGINNING!



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# SCARLET'S SCREAM MACHINE

by CHRIS ALEXANDER

UNRATED

"A TOTAL NON-STOP GORY GOOD TIME"

— MALEVOLENT MAGAZINE

## FIVE BLOODY TWISTED TALES

Indie horror filmmaker and rabid KISS fan Walter Ruether, better known as the gutsling character he created, Scarlet (DEATH BY VHS) Fry, has dedicated his life to microbudget monster movies made for peanuts and packed with energy. His latest is a splatterific shot-on-video anthology shocker called SCREAM MACHINE, and since Ruether is both a warrior of weird cinema and a Gene Simmons enthusiast, it made sense to weave him into the fabric of this issue.

Ladies and germs, Scarlet Fry...

**DELIRIUM:** SCREAM MACHINE is one of your gorier efforts. Who did the FX?  
**WALTER RUETHER:** The gore in SCREAM MACHINE was mostly done by

myself and my special effects partner on NIGHTMARE ALLEY, Laurence Holloway, who also had a small part in helping me make the head piece for the "Dahmer" segment. Paul C. Hemmes did all the effects for the "Septic Shock" segment; Paul made the underwater skeleton with the maggots in its eyes, which was one of our best effects, so it was really a collaboration, but I'd say I did about 75% of the effects.

**DELIRIUM:** What appeals to you about the anthology format?

**RUETHER:** What appeals to me the most about anthologies is that they allow you to have a more dynamic range of emotions, and with each story being different, you can explore many different subgenres in

one film. I love the fact you get to watch one short film, and then there's another one coming, so you never know what you're gonna get; it's the element of surprise.

**DELIRIUM:** How long did it take you to put this together?  
**RUETHER:** We made SCREAM MACHINE in record time. It took us six months to make the film and get a distribution deal. My partner, Paul C. Hemmes, really had a big hand in this. He is a great editor, and he did a lot of overnight editing and pumped his heart and soul into this thing. If it wasn't for him, this movie would probably still be in production; I owe him a lot.

**DELIRIUM:** What were some of the challenges in making a low-budget film with these many people and locations?

**RUETHER:** I'd have to say the biggest challenge for us was to just make a good, entertaining film. Most filmmakers know how much impact a good soundtrack will have on a film, so another one of the challenges was finding somebody who could crank out a good score; with our budget that was tough, but we did it. We found a brilliant musician from Thailand named Kirk Mazzia who used to play with Rick Agnew from the legendary 1980s punk band called The Adolescents. Kirk was hired on the spot and did all the music for the film; everything fit perfectly and he was very easy to work with.

One of my pet peeves is scheduling, trying to get 10 people to take time off work and be at the same place on the same day at the same time. But if you're like me, you never give up, and the movie gets made no matter the challenges.  
**DELIRIUM:** Why do you keep

doing what you do?

**RUETHER:** I have always been a creative person. As a kid I drew a lot and loved art, then I fell in love with music and wanted to start a Scarlet Fry band. It would have been like the next Alice Cooper, but I can't sing for the life of me, so I took the character into film. Film has become my creative outlet; I do it because I love doing it and for no other reason. Every time I finish a film, I say to myself, "This is it"; then two months will go by, maybe three, and *bam*, a light goes on and I've gotta make another film; it's inevitable. When you get a taste of your dreams starting to come true, you just want more and more. Gene Simmons once said that, and I can totally relate.

# Linnea vs. creepozoids and more

**T**oday, the title of "Scream Queen" is flung around without much in the way of qualification. Mainstream reviewers less attuned to the genre world are quick to bestow the appellation on any young ingenue who merely appears in more than one horror film, and a good portion of these actresses then seize upon the Scream Queen image as a sort of marketing hook, smiling behind tables at horror conventions or staging their own blood-soaked promotional photo shoots.

True fans, however, know that there was a time when much more went into earning the often-questionable Scream Queen honor—that it's really less the twitter hashtag of today and more like a set of sergeant's stripes, won through hard days on scruffy basement/backyard indie productions, and written in a braille

By **TREVOR PARKER**



means that the industry typically typecasts those performers and confine them to horror fare. Is there a role that Quigley felt disappointed to miss out on, like perhaps swanning around the stage as Lady Macbeth? Laughing at the suggestion, Quigley says, "I've never gotten a chance! Though this would fall under horror, it would probably be a person like Linda Hamilton in *TERMINATOR*. One of my favourite movies, believe it or not, is *MOULIN ROUGE*. Something totally different—that would be fun. Or something really silly like *TANK GIRL* [laughs]. But never Shakespeare. That would be so hard, like learning a totally different language. It's not really in my repertoire!"

Part of Quigley paying her dues included a stint in the world of Charles Band's Empire Pictures, specifically the ultra-low-budget Urban Classics division. This afforded her the rare chance at a lead role, in the tedious, warehouse-bound cheapie *CREEPOZIDS*. "CREEPOZIDS was great for me, because that was the first time I worked with [director] David DeCoteau," she says. "We got along from the start. I remember reading the script, and in the list of characters it said, 'Bianca—a muscular Hispanic woman.' Because, you know, we were trying to rip off *ALIENS* and stuff like that. So I thought it was so funny that I was going to be playing that part. We did that shower scene in a little kiddie pool, standing on apple boxes. Somebody was standing overhead with a Sparkletts bottle, pouring—thank goodness—warm water on us, through some sort of contraption. And it was so hard not to slip off of those apple boxes..."

Quigley's friendship with DeCoteau endures to this day, she says. "When I go to LA, a lot of times I'll stay with him. I think of him as a close friend, a really great guy. And very talented, because when I first met him, when I was about 20 or so, he was craft service on a movie I did that never got released. It's just weird that he's now gone so far."

of bumps and bruises caused by stuntwork performed with minimal training, minimum clothing and miniscule paycheck.

One of the great examples of an authentic Scream Queen is undoubtedly the lithe and lovely Linnea Quigley, whose sheaf of unforgettable screen moments includes naked gyrations atop a tombstone in *THE RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD* and hiding the lipstick in *NIGHT OF THE DEMONS'* freakiest scene. So there's really no better expert to weigh in ON the debatable blessing of the Scream Queen label. "That's a good question," she tells *DELIRIUM*. "I'm a lover of horror films, so I've always considered it a compliment. But I think, years ago... It's more accepted now because of *THE WALKING DEAD*, and a lot of these other shows, that it's cool to be [involved], and the '80s are

back. But I think back then, it did hurt me because [horror] was kind of looked down upon. Nowadays, not as much."

The downside of ruling the genre





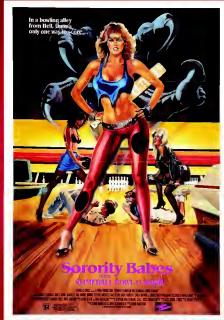


Quigley would be directed again by DeCoteau in a Band production, this time in the more fondly remembered **SORORITY BABES IN THE SLIMEBALL BOWL-O-RAMA**, a silly flick that nevertheless bestowed upon Quigley one of her

absolute favorite roles: "That one, besides playing Trash [in **ROTLD**] or Suzanne [in **NIGHT OF THE DEMONS**], is one of the first times when I really got to play a tough chick, and I loved it. David DeCoteau was the director again, and he let

me pick out which character I wanted to play, and I said 'I want that one! I want Spider!' It was another overnight, all-night shoot, at a bowling alley. We had to wait for it to close at 10 or 11 so we could start filming. So that was fun, because we got to bowl and film!"

Quigley would rejoin the band of Band in 2013 to appear in the web series **TROPHY HEADS**—a project that reunited Ms. Q with fellow **SLIMEBALL** monster monarchs Michelle Bauer and Brinke Stevens.



"It felt the same, it was really weird," she says of the reunion. "I was shocked that so much time had gone by, because it felt like just yesterday to me. Each of us was the same as we were, and it was just so much fun to do it."

**TROPHY HEADS** also marked the very first time Quigley was directed by Band, despite their decades of association: "He's a really good director, getting multiple takes and never saying, 'Good enough, moving on.' He actually cares, and really tried to get the best performances out of us. Whereas a lot of directors would say, 'We've got the elements, we'll just do one take and see how it goes,' and then sell the film on whatever gimmick."

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**DAY OF THE SCREAM QUEENS**

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PRESENTS

Fun Family Features



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# HO-HO-HORROR! SECRET SANTA slashes its way to screen.

By JOHN NICOL

In the tradition of iconic Canadian horror flicks like **BLACK CHRISTMAS** and **THE GATE** comes the Northern fright **SECRET SANTA**. Nestled within Cambridge, Ontario, a suburban neighborhood in the Great White North, a talented bunch of fledgling actors and filmmakers, under the direction of Mikey (**DEMON BITCH**) McMURRAN, began brewing up this nasty little indie horror/slasher flick. **DELIRIUM** was on site to chew the fat and get the inside scoop...

**DELIRIUM:** How did this project come about?

**MIKEY McMURRAN:** The idea for **SECRET SANTA** came out of frustration from working two retail jobs over Christmas. From the start of November through until New Year's, all I heard in the mall I worked at was repeated Christmas carols and the stress of the shoppers. The film is

a tip of the hat to the '80s VHS slashers I loved watching when I was young; I just added comedy elements to the mix.

**DELIRIUM:** You have some gruesome practical FX; any gory details you can share?

**McMURRAN:** Carlos [**FEMALE WERE-WOLF**] Henriques and The Butcher Shop did amazing effects on this film. I can't praise their work enough! The film would not be what it is without the nasty gore and carnage they produced. I don't want to give too much away, but we have some really cool, creative deaths in the film. I showed a first cut of the film to my family, and they squirmed at the death scenes. Carlos is very organized, and the most laid-back guy you'd ever meet. He loved the idea of the film and that we were trying to create a sense of nostalgia for the horror fans of the late '70s/early '80s. He pulled no punches and created some of the

nastiest work I've ever seen!

**DELIRIUM:** Any tips of the hat to other Canadian slasher masterpieces like **BLACK CHRISTMAS**, **MY BLOODY VALENTINE** or **PROM NIGHT**?

**McMURRAN:** I absolutely love the Canadian slashers, and there are many little nods to them throughout the film. The two biggest inspirations for **SECRET SANTA** were **PROM NIGHT** and **BLACK CHRISTMAS**. Especially the cinematography. Our DP Michael Malko did a fantastic job with the lighting. We went for a more old-school lighting scheme, using practical light sources like high-wattage bulbs in household lamps to create that '70s/'80s horror look. We wanted to make it appear like we shot on 16mm and make it truly gritty, and that also goes for the music by Andre Becker. As much as we wanted to recreate a time in the genre we loved, we wanted to bring our own touch to the film, and that came with the humor. **SECRET SANTA** is as much a comedy as it is a horror movie. There are moments in this film that will make your jaw drop and cheeks blush. Just when we make you jump out of your seat in fear, we'll turn it around and make you chuckle.

**DELIRIUM:** The film is premiering at the



Blood in the Snow Film Festival in Toronto this month. Is there a release date planned?

**McMURRAN:** It's an exciting time for **SECRET SANTA**. For a release date and distribution, we'll have to keep you updated once we've finished our festival run. We want as many people to see **SECRET SANTA** as possible, so we intend to enter as many festivals as possible, all over the globe.

**DELIRIUM:** Is there more story to tell? Any room for **SECRET SANTA 2**?

**McMURRAN:** Is there more story to tell with **SECRET SANTA**? Absolutely! I can't give away what goes on in the film, but I have some prequel ideas rumbling inside my head. It all depends on the story. We'll see!



# THE DIVINE HORROR OF JOSE PRENDES

By JASON BENE

**D**ELIRIUM caught up with indie genre filmmaker Jose Prendes for a candid interview covering his impressive and wildly diverse body of work thus far.

**DELIRIUM:** Where did your love of cinema begin?

**JOSE PRENDES:** I was an only child, and orphaned at an early age, but somehow movies were always there to keep me company. My parents passed when I was 5, and being moved around until I finally settled in with my godparents, I found movies as a form of stable escape. I didn't have to live in a world where sad shit was happening. I could live in a world where people could fly and monsters could be defeated. That's powerful mojo for a little kid, and I make it a point to never forget that early impact; it helps to remind me to keep my head in the game when filmmaking gets difficult, which it frequently can be. But from an early age, I devoted myself to the silver screen, because it gave me so much back.

**DELIRIUM:** Do you prefer writing or directing?

**PRENDES:** The best answer is both. Writing is great and freeing and can be remarkably stress-free if you let yourself go, but I feel that if you only write a film, you really only partially create it. Directing the script is where the meat meets the bone, and to me you can't really have one without the other. I will write everything I direct, because that's how I like to have it. But that doesn't mean I will direct everything I write, because sometimes the bills need to get paid and writing is a much faster, less involved process.

**DELIRIUM:** In your directorial debut, *THE MONSTER MAN*, you starred alongside seminal genre actors Tom Savini, Linnea Quigley and Denice Duff. That must have been a surreal time for you on set.

**PRENDES:** It was my first movie, straight out of film school. I didn't want to waste a minute of time; I felt like school had been a waste already. I started out with a serious

thriller in mind, but after the first day of shooting, I realized my resources would not lend themselves to that type of film, so I went for all-out comedy. It was, and so far still is, the greatest and purest filmmaking experience of my life. I did it with my friends, had total control and it was a fucking blast! Having Linnea, Tom and Denice agree to be in it was icing on the cake and it made me very happy because I felt like a real filmmaker, not just some dumbass kid with a camera. Sure, looking at it now, it is rough around the edges, but I absolutely love it and am so proud of what we accomplished with it. Also, it's the one film I released that went worldwide and actually made money!

**DELIRIUM:** The zombie subgenre really took off—again—around the time you made *CORPSES ARE*

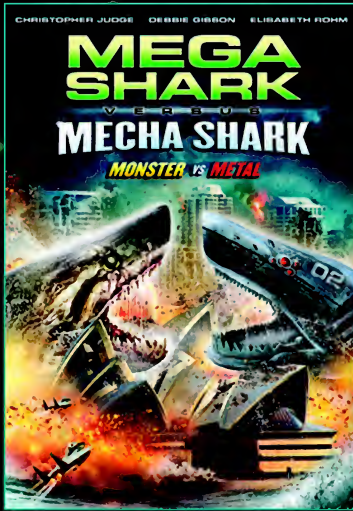
*FOREVER* in the early 2000s. How did you go about approaching the undead?

**PRENDES:** I've always been a zombie-movie fan, even before it was trendy. I love me some Lucio Fulci! I've also always been a huge James Bond fan. I wanted to make a zombie picture, but I didn't want to make the usual thing, so I figured out a way to combine the two. With *CORPSES*, you get the first ever zombie spy movie, and that was a blast to make. Shot on 35mm, with an all-star cast featuring the amazing Richard Lynch, Brinke Stevens, Debbie Rochon, Felissa Rose and my pal Linnea Quigley again. It was a blast, but it burned me out completely. I was so exhausted after that movie, because I did everything! I was directing and acting, plus I did craft services and was the producer and the driver for most of the cast, so it was a tough shoot going it alone. But I met my wife on that set, and she has since regenerated me.

**DELIRIUM:** How much of *HAUNTING OF WINCHESTER HOUSE* is the story you penned?

**PRENDES:** The very bare bones of it. It was such a fun assignment. The Asylum was returning to horror, and I had a chance to make something really unique. Then the director they hired threw out my script and wrote his own version. I only got story credit, and that was minimal. But all the good stuff that got cut out, I was able to employ in my next *HAUNTING* film, *THE HAUNTING OF WHALEY HOUSE*, which I was able to direct as well.

**DELIRIUM:** *THE HAUNTING OF WHA-*





LEY HOUSE is great stuff on a minuscule budget. Do you feel it is the best movie you have directed to date?

**PRENDES:** We pulled off a lot with that film. I was left relatively alone by The Asylum to make that movie, and I got to hire my actor friends and the crew I trusted, so it was a real family affair. It was a whirlwind 12-day shoot, but it was one location. I wrote it so it was easy to film quickly, and everyone performed above their game. It's my second favorite directing job; my first is the director's cut of *THE DIVINE TRAGEDIES*. But in terms of final vision put out into the world, *WHALEY* really is the closest to what I wanted to make.

**DELIRIUM:** Lynn Lowry from *THE CRAZIES* and *SHIVERS* fame appears in that movie, alongside a large ensemble of newcomers. Did you need someone like her to elevate the flick and give it an edge over its direct-to-video counterparts?

**PRENDES:** I was told the film had to be non-SAG, so my hopes of getting one or two great genre stalwarts in there as a nod to the fans were quickly dashed. Then Lynn contacted me on Facebook and asked if she might be right for any of the roles. She is an amazing actress, and I was a huge fan of her work and her other real quality on film. I told her there was a perfect role, but it wasn't a union shoot. She said that didn't matter due to her Fi-Core status, and I cast her immediately. She just nails the emotional beats, and I was thrilled to death to have her on the set.

**DELIRIUM:** A few years before he hit paydirt with the *SHARKNADO* franchise, filmmaker Anthony C. Ferrante shot your script *HANSEL & GRETEL*. Were you on the scene to make sure your vision made it to final cut?

**PRENDES:** After *WHALEY*, which went great and had zero issues in production

and post, this project came up for me to write. Naturally, I wanted to direct it too, but they gave it to Ferrante. Yes, I was disappointed, but I liked his earlier film *BOO*, so I knew he was a kindred spirit. We met and hit it off, and he took my suggestion for Gretel, casting Stephanie Greco from *WHALEY HOUSE*. I was on set, and to be honest, it didn't go according to my vision. But then again, it couldn't, because I wasn't directing it. Every screenwriter will say there are a thousand things they would change about a script they didn't direct themselves. Actually, they would say that about something they directed, also.

**DELIRIUM:** The sequel, *HANSEL VS. GRETEL*, was released this year. What was that experience like?

**PRENDES:** I had high hopes for that one in terms of what we could accomplish. But I was painted into a corner by a last-minute script change imposed on me at

the end of the first movie, and the plot for the sequel had to course-correct into supernatural territory to make that ending work. I really loved the script, and I'm glad that Brent Lydic was able to return to reprise his role as a Hansel, in a more badass form.

**DELIRIUM:** There have been four *MEGA SHARK* movies (so far), and you laid the groundwork for the third entry, *MEGA SHARK VS. MECHA SHARK*. Thank you for giving me a small part (alongside Brendan Mitchell) in this love letter to *GODZILLA VS. MECHAGODZILLA*!

**PRENDES:** Well, I could see that you were definitely up to the challenge, so I trusted you to be able to run away from Mecha when it went berserk. I'm pleased that I was right! I was kind of worried to write a *MEGA* movie, to be honest. So many times a writer gets pigeonholed into one genre or another, and I didn't want that to happen. But I quickly embraced







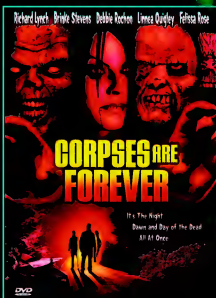
the fun of the idea and had a blast with it. I will say it was the most frustrating writing experience of my life, but Emile Smith directed the hell out of that picture.

**DELIRIUM:** Did you feel Mega Shark had to once again make the überleap in the sky to attack a plane?

**PRENDES:** Of course! It was the jump-the-shark moment of the first movie, so I felt a callback to it with the Mecha saving the plane would not only be a fun nod to the series, but would demonstrate perfectly what a superb match Mecha was for Mega. The producers embraced it wholeheartedly.

**DELIRIUM:** THE DIVINE TRAGEDIES is dark and nihilistic material that harks back to old-school David Lynch. What is the plot crunch of the film, and when can we see it?

**PRENDES:** It's a retelling of the Leopold and Loeb murder case from 1924. It is an awful story where these two guys wanted to prove they were so smart they could get away with murder, so they killed an 8-year-old boy and nearly did get away with it, except for a pair of glasses that one of them left at the scene. It's been made into films before, most notably **COMPULSION** with Orson Welles and **ROPE** with Jimmy Stewart. I've always been fascinated by the story of a psycho duo; however, I didn't want to tell a straight horror story. I wanted it to be a little more lyrical, a little more poetic, so yes I went in a Lynchian/Cronenbergian direction with it,



and really had a blast fleshing that one out. It's playing festivals worldwide now, and we're hoping for a 2016 release.

**DELIRIUM:** When I visited you on set, Ken Foree was chewing up his scenes and owning his role. He is a true professional.

**PRENDES:** Ken is amazing in it. When we went out to him with the material, I sent him a personal letter explaining why I thought he would be fucking perfect for the role. He responded immediately to the character, because it's someone he doesn't normally get a chance to play, and

he embraced the part with such joy. He is a dedicated and hard-working actor, which explains why he's still working today. He's also ridiculously fun on set! Barbara Crampton and Sean Whalen were the same way. They are true pros and great people!

**DELIRIUM:** What is next on the docket for you?

**PRENDES:** I'm taking a break from horror. I want to explore different genres. I'm working on two new films now. The first one is completely off-the-wall wacky, and it's just what I needed after THE DIVINE TRAGEDIES. It's called **UNSPEAKABLE HORRORS: THE PLAN 9 CONSPIRACY**. It will be similar to the popular documentary **ROOM 237**, but instead of deconstructing the hidden meanings of **THE SHINING**, we will be deconstructing the truths lurking beneath the cardboard cheapness of **PLAN 9**. I've interviewed quite an impressive bunch of filmmakers for it, including Mick Garris, Tom Holland, Bull Lustig, Fred Olen Ray and Scott Alexander and Larry Karaszewski, who wrote Tim Burton's **ED WOOD**, among other cool folks.

After that, I don't know. I have a few other comedy films lined up, if nothing else heats up. I like working independently, with a small budget and a limited crew. It's more fun that way. But we'll see what happens with **THE DIVINE TRAGEDIES**. If they offer me **JURASSIC WORLD 2**, I'll take it!

# Maria Rohm on Jess Franco

By CHRIS ALEXANDER

**W**ith Blue Underground's recent release of *JUSTINE*, one of the great collaborations of legendary producer Harry Alan Towers and the late, great director Jess Franco (see issue #7), *DELIRIUM* took some time to speak with the film's co-star and Towers' widow, the lovely Maria Rohm. The actress and producer appeared in dozens of international films, several of them directed by Franco and all of them buoyed by the presence of the Austrian-born actress.

**DELIRIUM:** Do you remember your first meeting with Franco?

**MARIA ROHM:** Jess was a very unique human being. I first met him in Rio de Janeiro for *BLOOD OF FU MANCHU*. I found very quickly that Jess was a rather temperamental director. If everything didn't go his way, he had a tendency to sulk, which worked against him and his creativity. I didn't like the outfit Jess made me wear in the film; I felt it was almost comical. Jess was more emotion- and feeling-based; after all, he was a jazz musician at heart. Mind you, when Jess explained all the supposed symbolism in some of the scenes, I had a hard time following his thoughts. I never quite understood how an audience would get it without any kind of explanation. It could be said that Jess was at the mercy of his feelings. That's why his work could be so uneven. He could be a genius on one day, uninvolved and lackluster the next.

**DELIRIUM:** All of the pictures that Towers mounted for Franco were among his best. What was it about their relationship that worked?

**ROHM:** This is going to sound odd, but I believe it was me. I understood them both and was able to communicate Harry's point of view to Jess, and vice versa. I was often Harry's ambassador on the set. Harry set the pictures up, but did not believe in interfering with the director. Once Harry hired somebody, it was for better or for worse, so to speak. He did not hover over them, but trusted them to do the best they could. Also, Harry was normally setting up his next film, so he generally didn't spend a lot of time on the set, which seemed to work out just fine. We talked every day a number of times on the phone, so if there was an underlying problem, we would try to find solutions in the very early stages.

**DELIRIUM:** Was Franco ever

difficult as a director?

**ROHM:** At times, I would have to say yes. Jess' mood swings could be difficult to understand and exasperating to deal with, at least for me. Jess could also be a total joy to be around and to work with,

truly inspirational. However, never knowing how the day would develop was disquieting.

**DELIRIUM:** Any memories of making *VENUS IN FURS*?

**ROHM:** James Darren was very laid-back and serious. He often sang between takes,



which was very pleasant. Then there was Dennis Price, a total sweetheart! We shot the majority of the film in Istanbul, which is a very old, exciting and historically interesting place. Margaret Lee and Klaus Kinski felt like family, so I was very comfortable.

**DELIRIUM:** You play Juliette in *JUSTINE*. What are your thoughts on this film today?

**ROHM:** I haven't seen *JUSTINE* in quite a while, but I liked the film. I had a great time with Jack Palance, who remained a lifelong friend. I feel all the performances are good. Romina Powers was very young and inexperienced, but I think she was just fine after everything was cut together. I spent very enjoyable time with Linda Christian. She was beautiful and glamorous and very old-Hollywood.

Unfortunately, there were creative differences between Harry and Jess. Because of this, *COUNT DRACULA* [1970] was the last film we made together.

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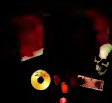


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Now, Sonny Carl Davis takes the cake! Sonny was one of the leads in *TERRORVISION*, a film we shot at our Empire Studios in Rome, Italy back in 1985. Seven years later, Sonny played a character named Robbit in *TRANCERS 2* starring Tim Thomerson, Helen Hunt, Megan Ward and Jeffrey Combs. Robbit was a slightly mentally challenged orderly in the film, and I loved his character and the way Sonny played it. 13 years later, when we were casting for *EVIL BONG*, we needed someone to play the part of a delivery dude who brings the stoners the Evil Bong and gets caught up in their misadventures, and I thought, "Why couldn't it be Robbit?" I called Sonny, flew him out to LA and Robbit has been in every *EVIL BONG* film since then.

Now, this can only happen if you have a body of work that allows you to borrow from past films, not to mention that it helps that our features are all rooted in the same sci-fi, fantasy and horror genres. And this is a theme I want to focus on more in the coming years: more crossovers and more characters from our Full Moon universe. Who knows how it'll all end? I mean, we might as well do something most companies cannot do: create a demented universe full of unique characters, puppets, dolls, monsters and mayhem that may eventually send us all into a massive, binge-watching 400-hour-long marathon of madness, as we slip dozed and omused into a state of...wait for it...*DELIRIUM*!

—Charles Band

**A**s I was shooting the last day on *EVIL BONG HIGH-5* (Full Moon's 271st film!), I was reflecting on how cool it was to have Sonny Carl Davis, Robyn Sydney and John Jordon all in the same shot. Not just because they're extremely talented, but because I've worked with them over many years and have managed to pull their characters from films going back as far as 1985!

on *GINGERDEAD MAN*, where she was tortured both on and off set by the amazing and unpredictable Gary Busey. After *GINGERDEAD MAN*, Robin joined the *EVIL BONG* cast of crazies and starred in many other Full Moon films like *SKULLHEADS* (recently rereleased on Hulu as *DEVIOUS*) and *DEAD MAN'S HAND*,



John Jordon and I first did *DR. MOREAU'S HOUSE OF PAIN* back in 2000, and five years later, John joined the cast of *EVIL BONG*, working alongside Tommy Chong and Robin Sydney. John has since appeared in all the *EVIL BONG* films as well as *GINGERDEAD-MAN VS. EVIL BONG*.

Robin Sydney and I first worked together





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